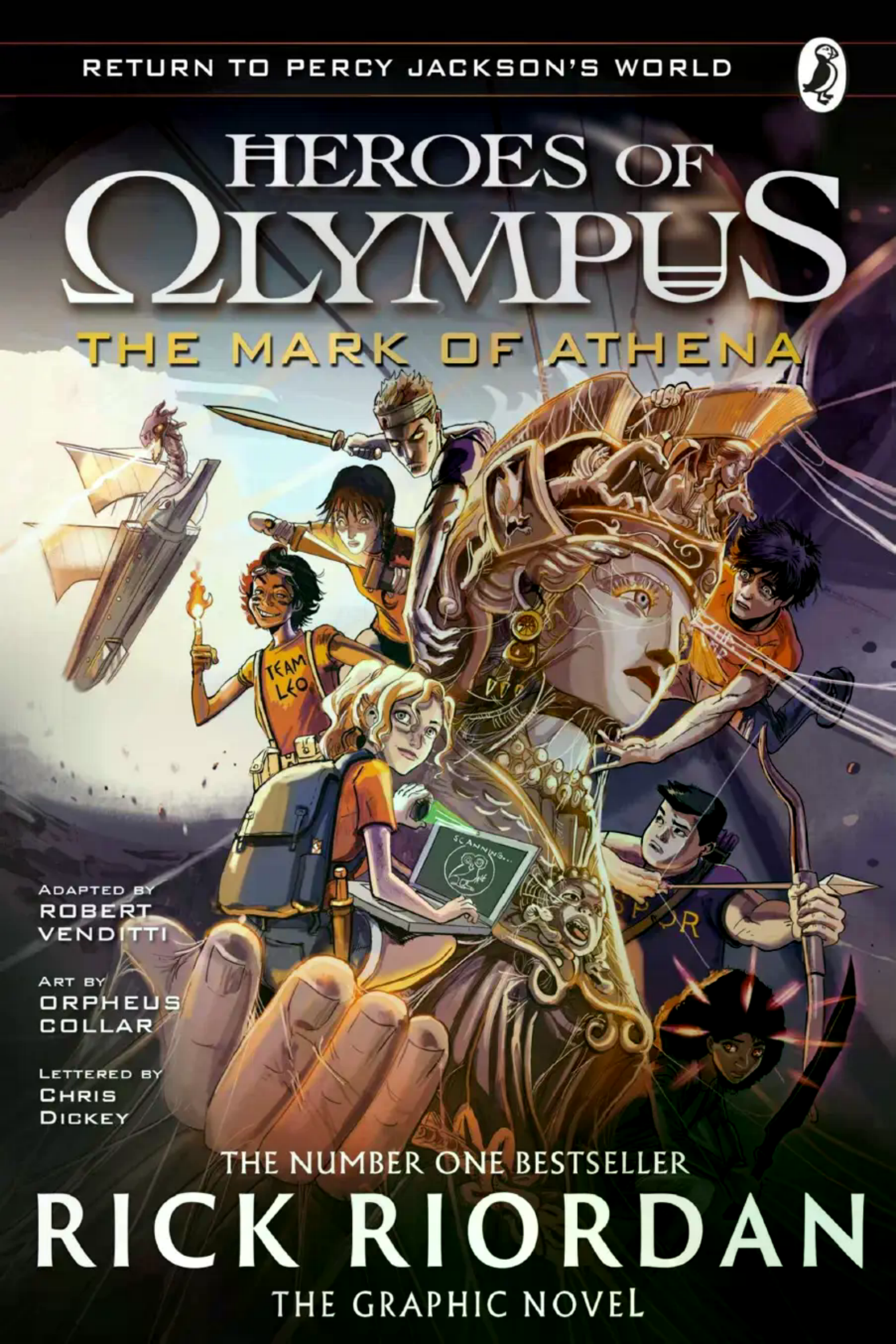
RETURN TO PERCY JACKSON'S WORLD

HEROES OF OLYMPUS

THE MARK OF ATHENA



ADAPTED BY
ROBERT VENDITTI

ART BY
ORPHEUS COLLAR

LETTERED BY
CHRIS DICKEY

THE NUMBER ONE BESTSELLER

RICK RIORDAN

THE GRAPHIC NOVEL

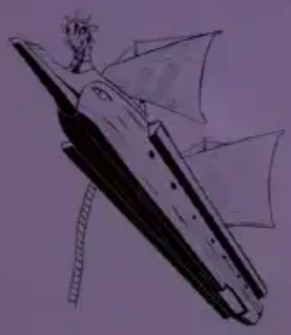
HEROES OF OLYMPUS

THE MARK OF ATHENA

THE GRAPHIC NOVEL

BY

RICK RIORDAN



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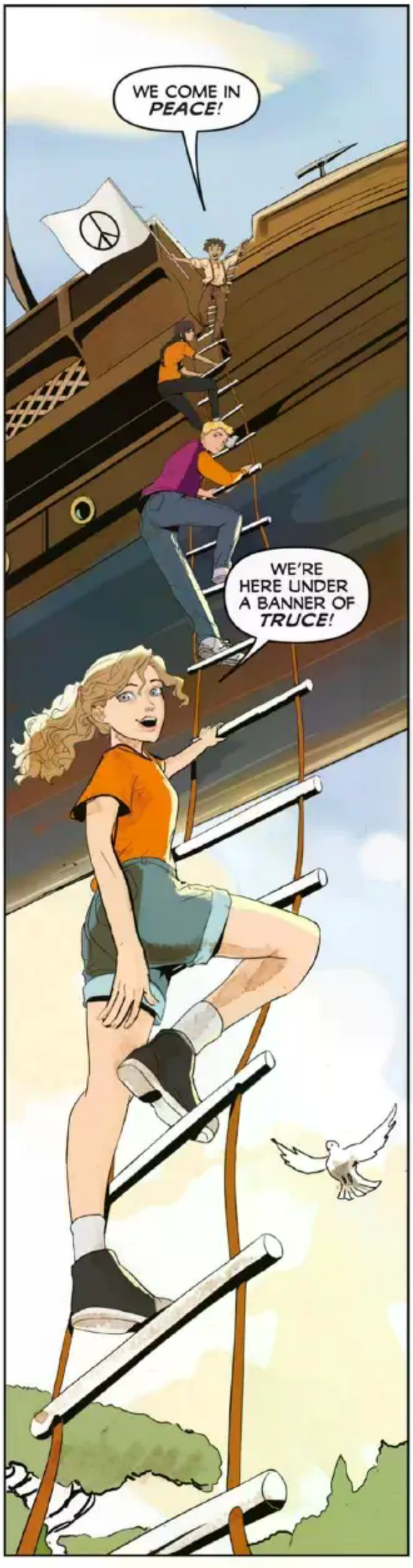
THE OAKLAND HILLS OUTSIDE SAN FRANCISCO.
SOUND THE HORNS!
GRAECI! GRAECI!
CAMP JUPITER.
HIDDEN HOME OF THE CHILDREN OF HUMANS AND ROMAN GODS.
PREPARE TO FIRE!
BASE OF THE TWELFTH LEGION FULMINATA.
THE GREEKS ARE ATTACKING!

SPQR


WE COME IN *PEACE!*
WE'RE HERE UNDER A BANNER OF *TRUCE!*

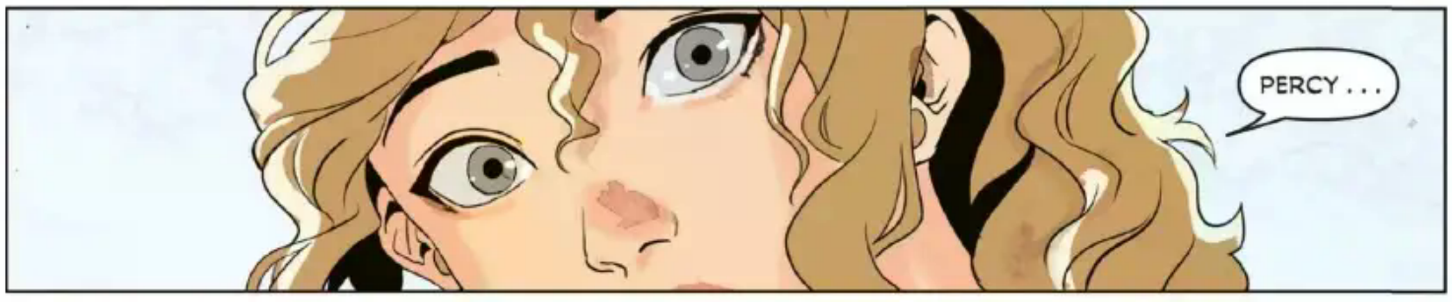
TRUCE?!
YOU'VE BROUGHT A *WARSHIP* WITHIN OUR CITY LIMITS!

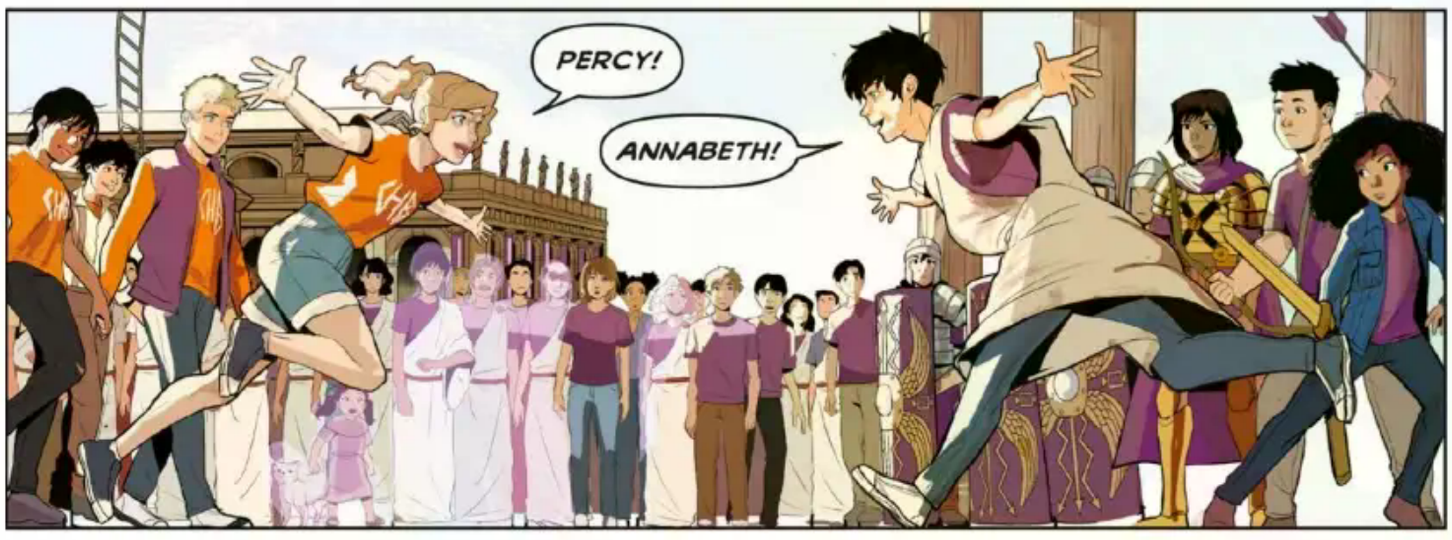
WE'RE STILL HOVERING, SO *TECHNICALLY* WE'RE NOT IN THE CITY.

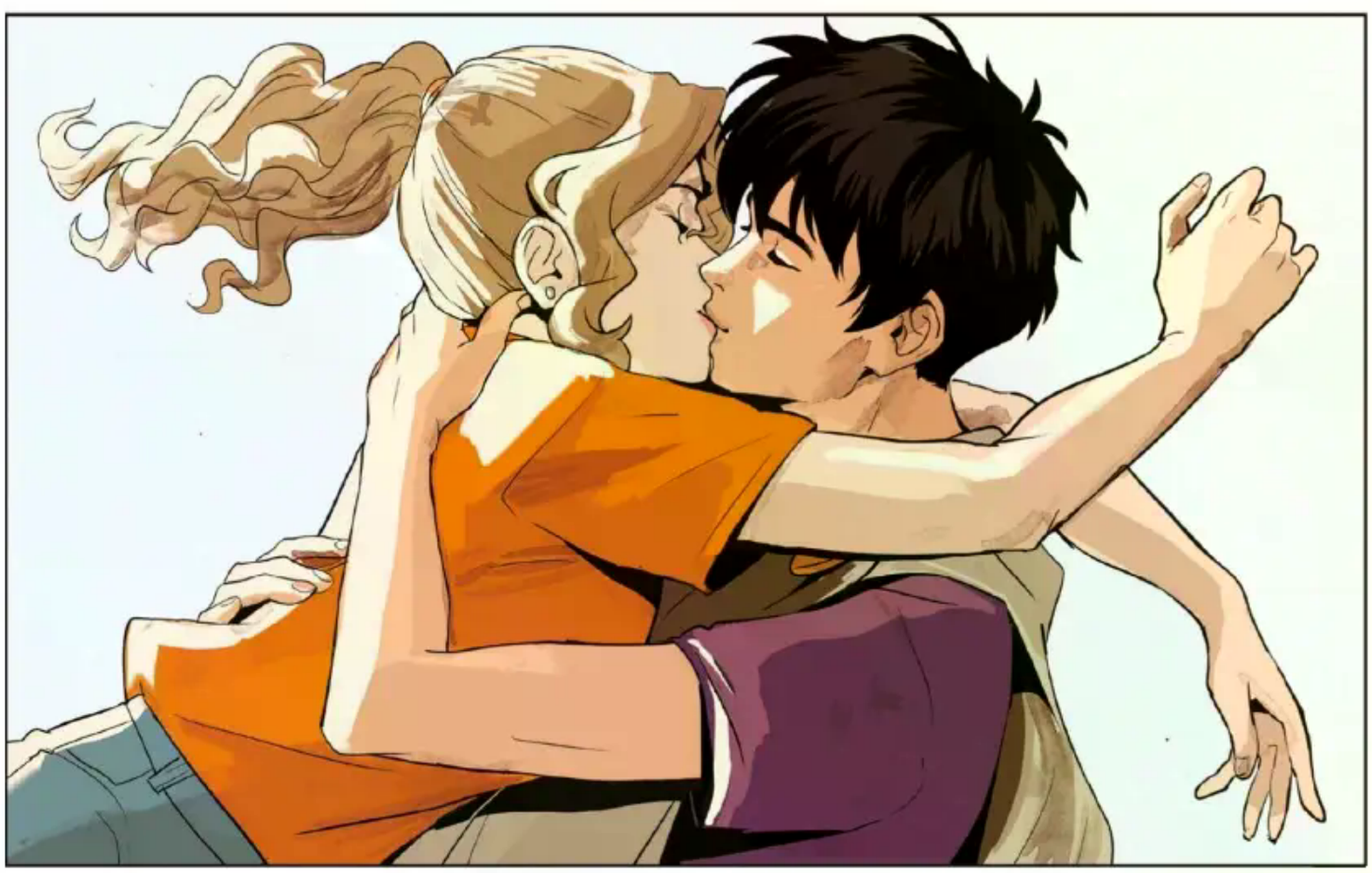
YOU WON'T FEEL SO CLEVER WITH A *ROMAN SPEAR* IN YOUR—
CENTURIONS!
STAND DOWN!

. . . JASON GRACE, MY FORMER *COLLEAGUE*. IT'S REALLY YOU?
YEAH, REYNA. IT'S GOOD TO BE BACK.
THESE ARE MY FRIENDS PIPER, LEO, AND—

. . . ANNABETH?

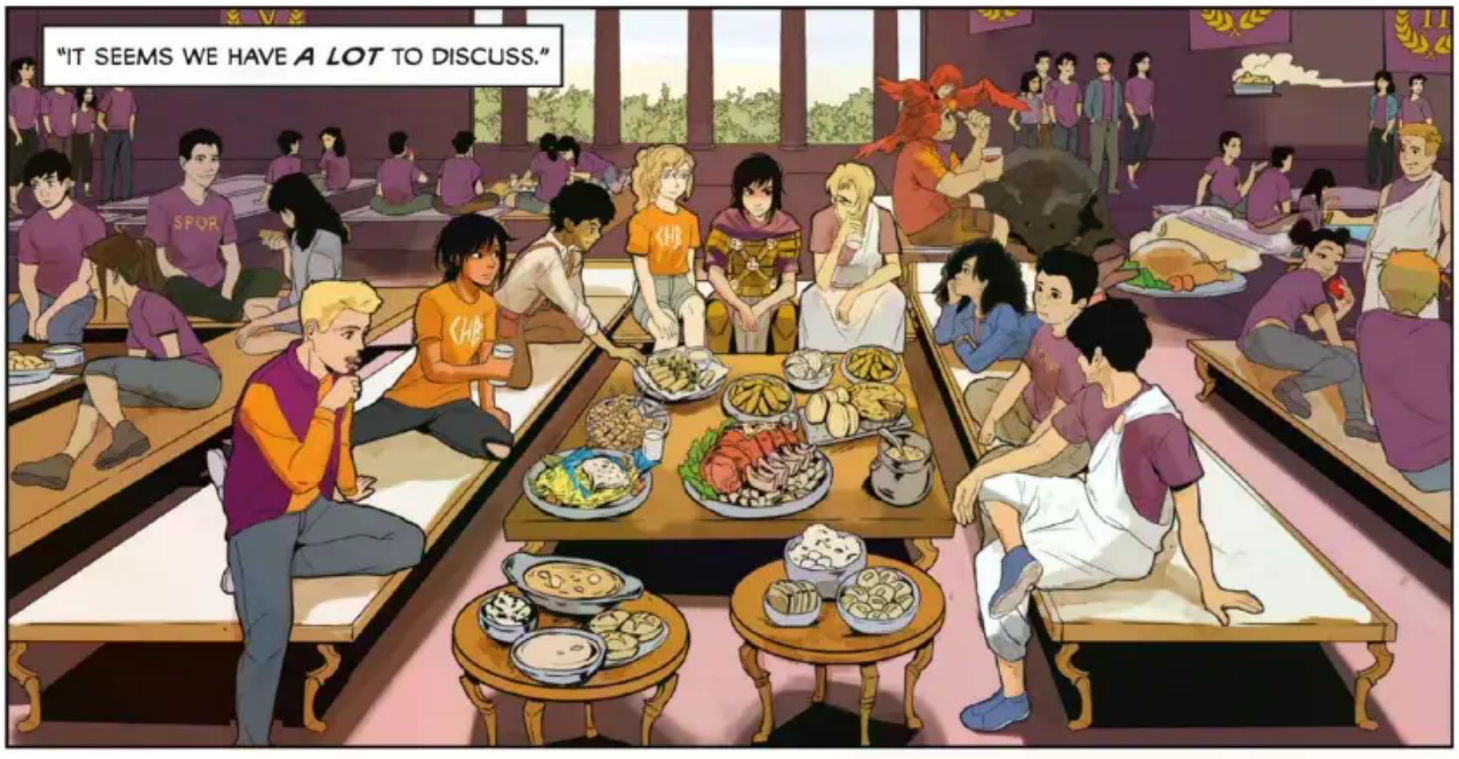

PERCY . . .

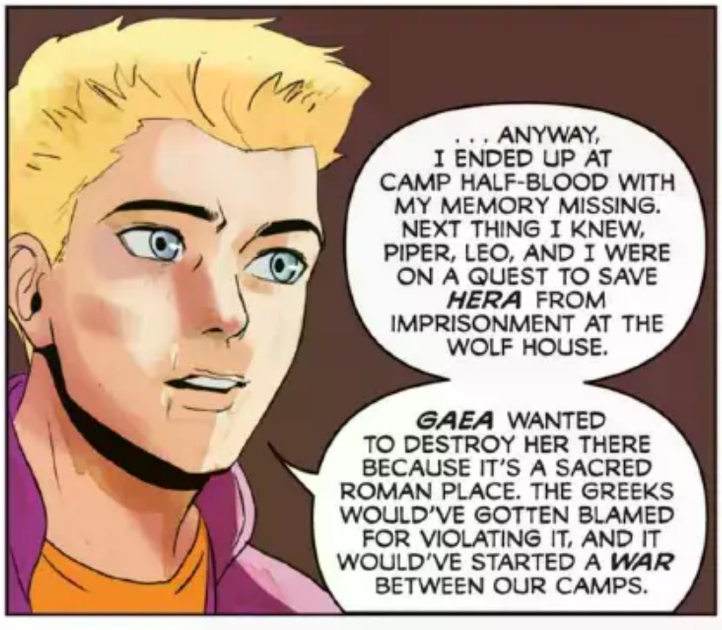

PERCY!
ANNABETH!



GODS, I NEVER THOUGHT—
?
IF YOU *EVER* LEAVE ME AGAIN, I SWEAR TO ALL THE GODS—
CONSIDER ME WARNED.
I MISSED YOU, TOO.
AHEM.
DON'T WORRY. I ONLY ATTACK MY BOYFRIEND LIKE THAT.
I'M ANNABETH.
I'M REYNA. *PRAETOR* OF CAMP JUPITER.
LET'S MEET YOUR COMRADES.

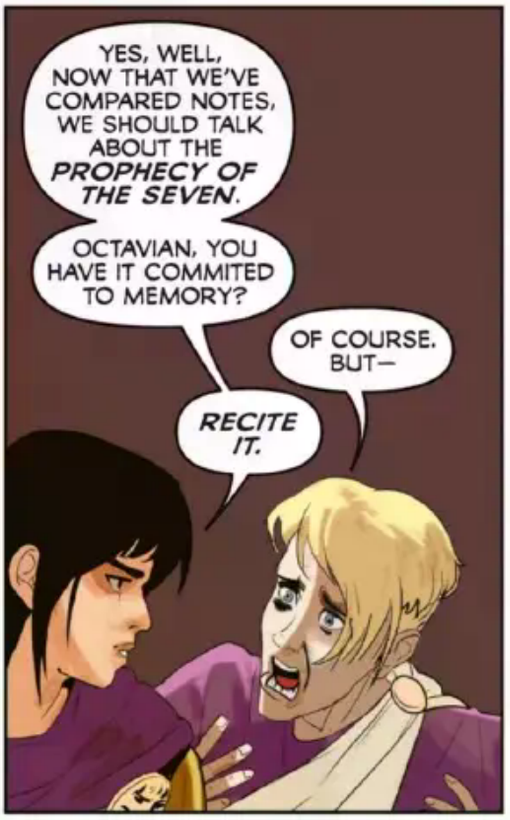
LEO VALDEZ.
'SUP.
PIPER MCLEAN.
JASON HAS TOLD US SO MUCH ABOUT YOU, REYNA.
ANCIENT HISTORY, I ASSURE YOU.
ALERT THE SPIRITS IN THE KITCHEN. TELL THEM TO PREPARE A WELCOME FEAST.
YOU'RE LETTING THESE *INTRUDERS* INTO CAMP? REYNA, THE *SECURITY RISKS*.
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO JUST *RELAX* IN THE SHADOW OF THEIR *WARSHIP*?
THESE ARE OUR *GUESTS*, OCTAVIAN. THEY'VE TRAVELED A LONG WAY. WE WILL WELCOME THEM, AND WE WILL TALK TO THEM.
OUTRAGEOUS!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT OCTAVIAN. MOST OF THE ROMANS ARE GOOD PEOPLE— LIKE REYNA HERE, AND FRANK AND HAZEL.
FRIENDS OF PERCY'S ARE FRIENDS OF OURS.
PLEASED TO MEET YOU ALL.
COME ALONG.

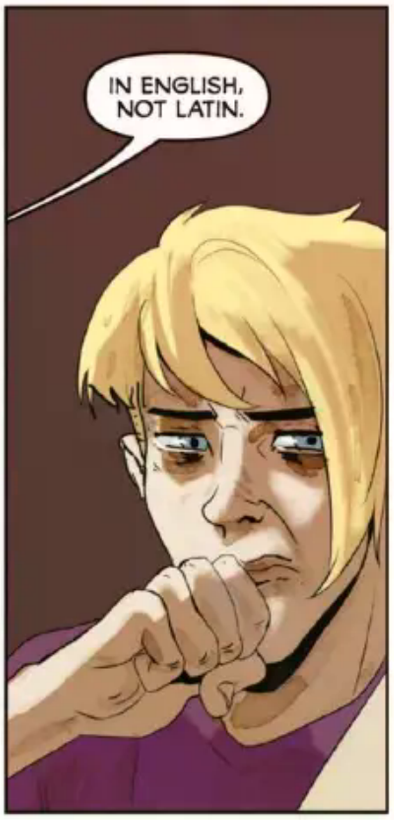

"IT SEEMS WE HAVE *A LOT* TO DISCUSS."


. . . ANYWAY, I ENDED UP AT CAMP HALF-BLOOD WITH MY MEMORY MISSING. NEXT THING I KNEW, PIPER, LEO, AND I WERE ON A QUEST TO SAVE *HERA* FROM IMPRISONMENT AT THE WOLF HOUSE.
GAEA WANTED TO DESTROY HER THERE BECAUSE IT'S A SACRED ROMAN PLACE. THE GREEKS WOULD'VE GOTTEN BLAMED FOR VIOLATING IT, AND IT WOULD'VE STARTED A *WAR* BETWEEN OUR CAMPS.

THE EARTH GODDESS HAS BEEN BUSY CAUSING TROUBLE HERE, TOO. FRANK, HAZEL, AND I HAD TO GO TO ALASKA AND DEFEAT THE GIANT ALCYONEUS.
WE FREED THE DEATH GOD *THANATOS* AND RETURNED WITH CAMP JUPITER'S LOST EAGLE STANDARD—JUST IN TIME TO REPEL AN ATTACK BY THE GIANTS' ARMY.
OH, AND MY *MEMORY* GOT WIPED, TOO. I DIDN'T EVEN REMEMBER I WAS GREEK.

NO WONDER THEY NAMED YOU PRAETOR IN MY PLACE. THANKS FOR HELPING MY CAMP WHILE I WAS GONE.
YOU'RE *THALIA GRACE'S* BROTHER, HUH? WOW. YOU LOOK NOTHING ALIKE.


YES, WELL, NOW THAT WE'VE COMPARED NOTES, WE SHOULD TALK ABOUT THE *PROPHECY OF THE SEVEN*.
OCTAVIAN, YOU HAVE IT COMMITED TO MEMORY?
OF COURSE. BUT—
RECITE IT.


IN ENGLISH, NOT LATIN.

"SEVEN HALF-BLOODS SHALL ANSWER THE CALL.

"TO STORM OR FIRE THE WORLD MUST FALL—"

"—AN OATH TO KEEP WITH A FINAL BREATH.

"AND FOES BEAR ARMS TO THE DOORS OF DEATH."

WE WERE GIVEN THE PROPHECY, TOO.

. . . IS IT TRUE YOU'RE A CHILD OF MINERVA?

UM, I MEAN ***ATHENA***.

YES. WHY? IS THAT A SURPRISE?

IF YOU'RE ***TRULY*** A CHILD OF THE ***WISDOM*** GODDESS—

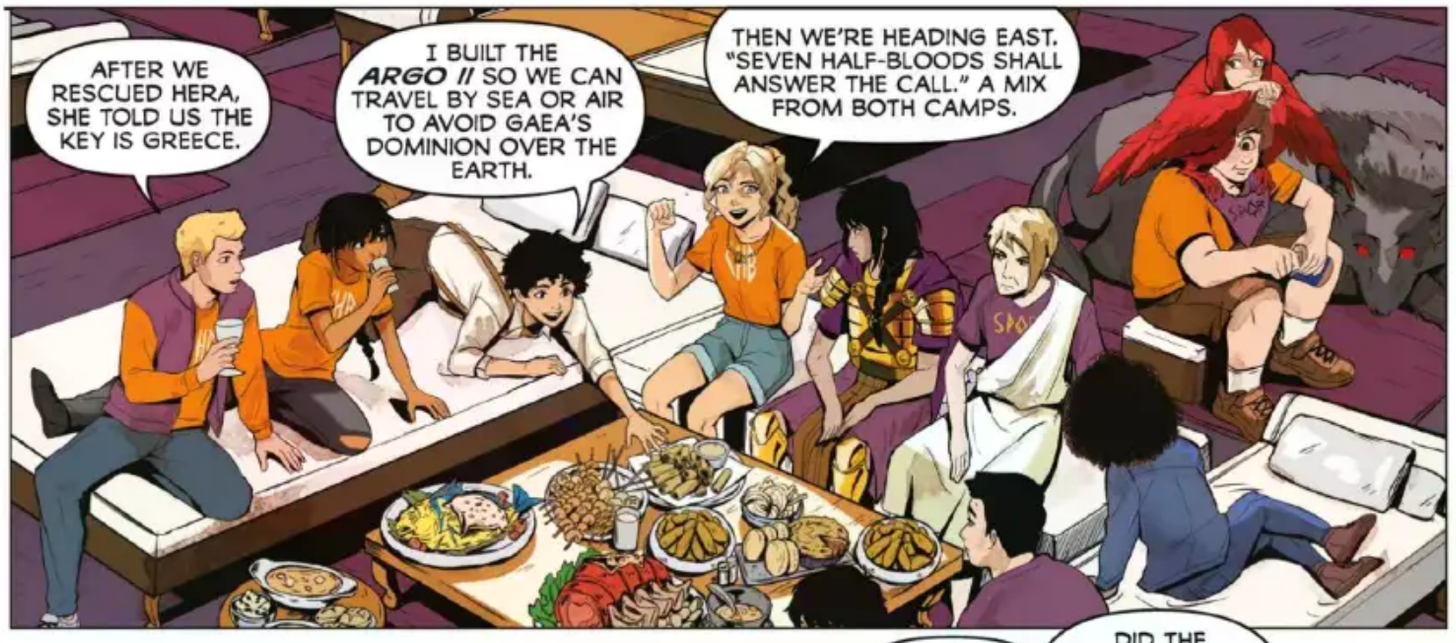
ANNABETH IS WHAT SHE SAYS SHE IS. BESIDES, PERCY HAS SPOKEN HIGHLY OF HER.

AT ANY RATE, SOME OF THE PROPHECY IS BECOMING CLEAR. "FOES BEAR ARMS TO THE DOORS OF DEATH."

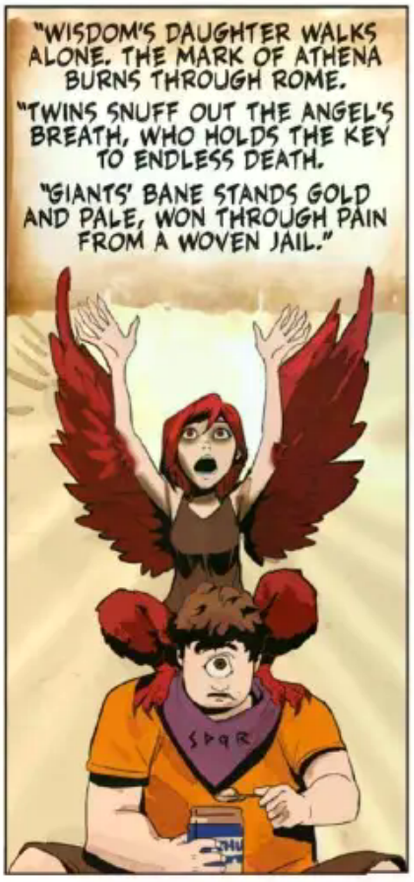
THAT HAS TO MEAN ***ROMANS*** AND ***GREEKS***. WE'RE SUPPOSED TO COMBINE FORCES.

NOW THAT WE'VE FREED THANATOS, MONSTERS WILL DISINTEGRATE AND RETURN TO ***TARTARUS*** AGAIN LIKE THEY USED TO.

BUT AS LONG AS THE DOORS OF DEATH ARE OPEN, THEY'LL JUST KEEP COMING BACK.


AFTER WE RESCUED HERA, SHE TOLD US THE KEY IS GREECE.
I BUILT THE ARGO II SO WE CAN TRAVEL BY SEA OR AIR TO AVOID GAEA'S DOMINION OVER THE EARTH.
THEN WE'RE HEADING EAST. "SEVEN HALF-BLOODS SHALL ANSWER THE CALL." A MIX FROM BOTH CAMPS.

PEQUOD
LUSITANIA
TITANIC
NO SHIPS . . .
ESSEX
GIANT CAN OPENER
HMS QUEENMARY


"WISDOM'S DAUGHTER WALKS ALONE. THE MARK OF ATHENA BURNS THROUGH ROME.
"TWINS SNUFF OUT THE ANGEL'S BREATH, WHO HOLDS THE KEY TO ENDLESS DEATH.
"GIANTS' BANE STANDS GOLD AND PALE, WON THROUGH PAIN FROM A WOVEN JAIL."

. . . WHAT WAS THAT?
DID THE WEIRD HARPY JUST SPEAK A PROPHECY? BECAUSE IT SOUNDED LIKE A PROPHECY.

WHO, UM, ELLA? PROBABLY JUST SOMETHING SHE READ IN A BOOK.
SHE, ER, READS A LOT. WE FOUND HER AT A LIBRARY WHEN WE WERE ON OUR QUEST.

TYSON, WHY DON'T YOU GO SOMEWHERE ELSE WITH ELLA FOR A WHILE. IS THAT OKAY?
NO PROBLEM, BROTHER!

WE HAVE A REAL PROPHECY TO WORRY ABOUT.
AND OCTAVIAN IS RIGHT ABOUT ONE THING. WE MUST GAIN THE SENATE'S APPROVAL BEFORE WE LET ANY OF OUR LEGIONNAIRES GO ON A QUEST.
THIS WHOLE THING SMELLS OF TREACHERY! THEIR FLYING TRIREME IS NO SHIP OF PEACE!
THE ARGO II? COME ABOARD, MAN. I'LL GIVE YOU A TOUR. YOU'LL SEE IT CHECKS OUT.
IT'S A GOOD IDEA.
WE'LL CONVENE THE SENATE IN ONE HOUR.
IN THE MEANTIME, I'D LIKE A FEW WORDS WITH ANNABETH.
ALONE.

IN OUR CAMP, ATHENA IS *MINERVA*. THE GODDESS OF CRAFTS AND WISDOM . . . SHE REALLY ISN'T A GODDESS OF *WAR* AS SHE IS TO YOU.
FOR THAT, WE ROMANS HAVE *BELLONA*. MY MOTHER.

UNLIKE YOUR MOTHER, BELLONA HAS NO GREEK EQUIVALENT. SHE IS FULLY, *TRULY* ROMAN. THE GODDESS OF PROTECTING THE HOMELAND.
TO US, MINERVA IS A *MAIDEN* GODDESS. LIKE DIANA, THE ONE YOU CALL ARTEMIS. THE IDEA THAT MINERVA WOULD HAVE CHILDREN . . .

GOT IT. I'M NOT SUPPOSED TO EXIST.
I GUESS I UNDERSTAND WHY OCTAVIAN DOESN'T SEEM TO WANT TO TRUST ME.

THE HARPY ELLA . . . IT *WAS* A PROPHECY SHE SPOKE. WE BOTH KNOW THAT, DON'T WE?
IT SOUNDED LIKE A PROPHECY.
BUT I'VE NEVER MET ELLA BEFORE, AND I'VE NEVER HEARD THOSE LINES. NOT EXACTLY.

I HAVE, AT LEAST SOME OF THEM.
I WANT TO HEAR IT FROM YOU. THE *TRUTH*. CONVINCE ME THAT I'M NOT MAKING A MISTAKE BY TRUSTING YOU.
EVERY TIME GREEK AND ROMAN DEMIGODS HAVE MET, WE'VE FOUGHT. CONFLICTS BETWEEN OUR TWO SIDES HAVE STARTED SOME OF THE MOST HORRIBLE *WARS* IN HUMAN HISTORY.

THIS ISN'T A TRICK, REYNA. HERA . . . *JUNO*, AS YOU CALL HER . . . SHE'S BROUGHT US TO THIS POINT BECAUSE WE'VE GOT TO WORK TOGETHER, OR GAEA WILL DESTROY US *ALL*.
I DON'T TRUST HER, BUT I *DO* TRUST MY FRIENDS.

I BELIEVE YOU MEAN WHAT YOU SAY.
BUT IF YOU GO TO THE ANCIENT LANDS—ESPECIALLY TO ROME ITSELF—THERE IS SOMETHING YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT YOUR MOTHER.
I ENCOUNTERED ANOTHER CHILD OF ATHENA ONCE. A SON. HE WAS ON A QUEST IN THE SEA OF MONSTERS.
"HE'D BEEN DRIVEN MAD."
"HE CLAIMED THAT HE'D BEEN TO ROME, FOLLOWING THE MARK OF ATHENA, A SPIRITUAL TRAIL OF BREAD CRUMBS.
HE KEPT MUTTERING ABOUT WISDOM'S CHILD. THE GIANTS' BANE STANDING GOLD AND PALE.
THE SAME LINES THE HARPY RECITED.
AT THE TIME, I HAD NO IDEA WHAT THEY MEANT. BUT I'M BEGINNING TO SUSPECT . . .
SUSPECT . . . WHAT?
THERE'S A LEGEND. PASSED DOWN AT CAMP JUPITER THROUGH THE CENTURIES.
IF IT'S TRUE, IT MAY BE THE CAUSE OF THE ANIMOSITY BETWEEN THE TWO CAMPS.
UNTIL THIS OLD SCORE IS FINALLY SETTLED, SO THE LEGEND GOES, ROMANS AND GREEKS WILL NEVER BE AT PEACE.
OLD SCORE?
WHAT OLD SCORE?
ANNABETH, THE LEGEND CENTERS ON YOUR MOTHER.
ATHENA—

BOOMB
THE GREEKS ARE FIRING ON US!
THEY'VE TRAINED THEIR WEAPONS ON ROME!
OUR TRUST IS BETRAYED!
BOOOMB
CHB
WHAT? NO! WE'D NEVER DO THIS!
PERHAPS YOU WERE NOT AWARE OF THIS TREACHERY!
BUT SOMEONE MUST PAY!

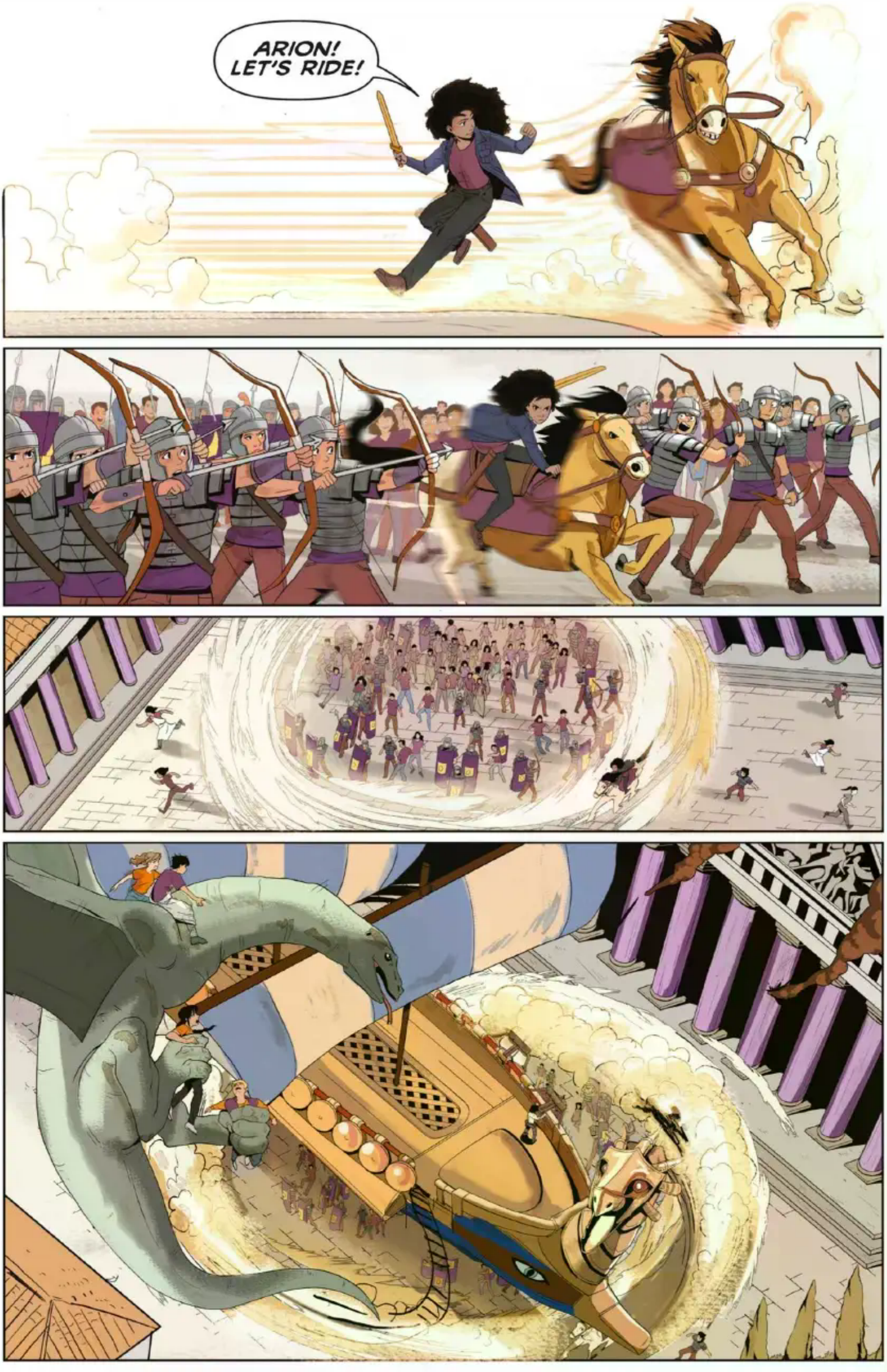
LEGIONNAIRES! FORM RANKS!
KILL THE INVADERS!
ROMANS! PLEASE!
WE WOULDN'T DO THIS!
GET BACK!
JASON!
WHAK
HAZEL, FRANK, NOW OR NEVER. ARE YOU IN ON THIS QUEST?
TIME TO GO!
OF COURSE WE ARE. I'LL BUY US TIME DOWN HERE. FRANK, CAN YOU GET THEM UP TO THE SHIP?
OH, GODS.
OKAY, SSSSURE.

IS THAT . . . ?
FRANK HAS A FEW SPECIAL TALENTS.

SNATCH!
JASON!

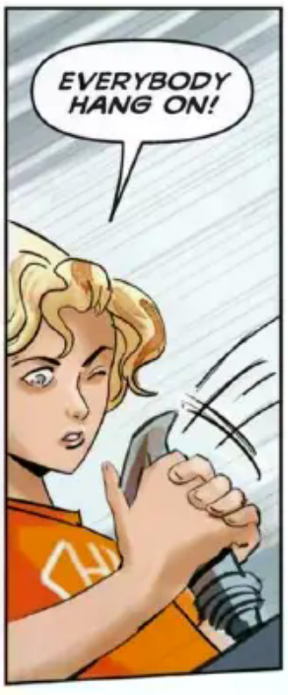
FIRE!
FIRE!

FWEEEET


ARION! LET'S RIDE!

DESTROY . . . THEM . . .
WMMP
UHNNN
ANNABETH! GET US OUT OF HERE!
FIRE!

KA-BOOM!

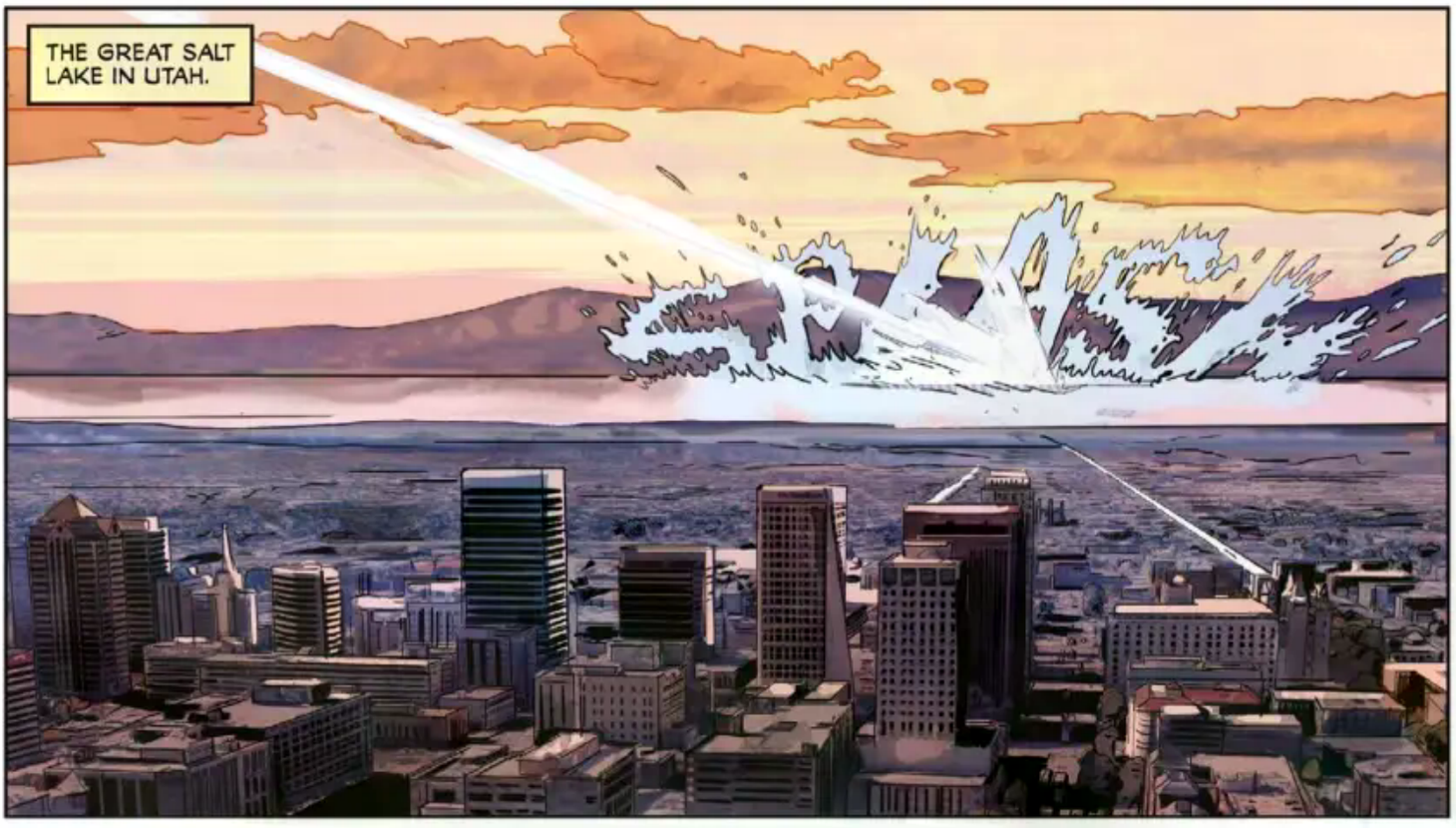

EVERYBODY HANG ON!

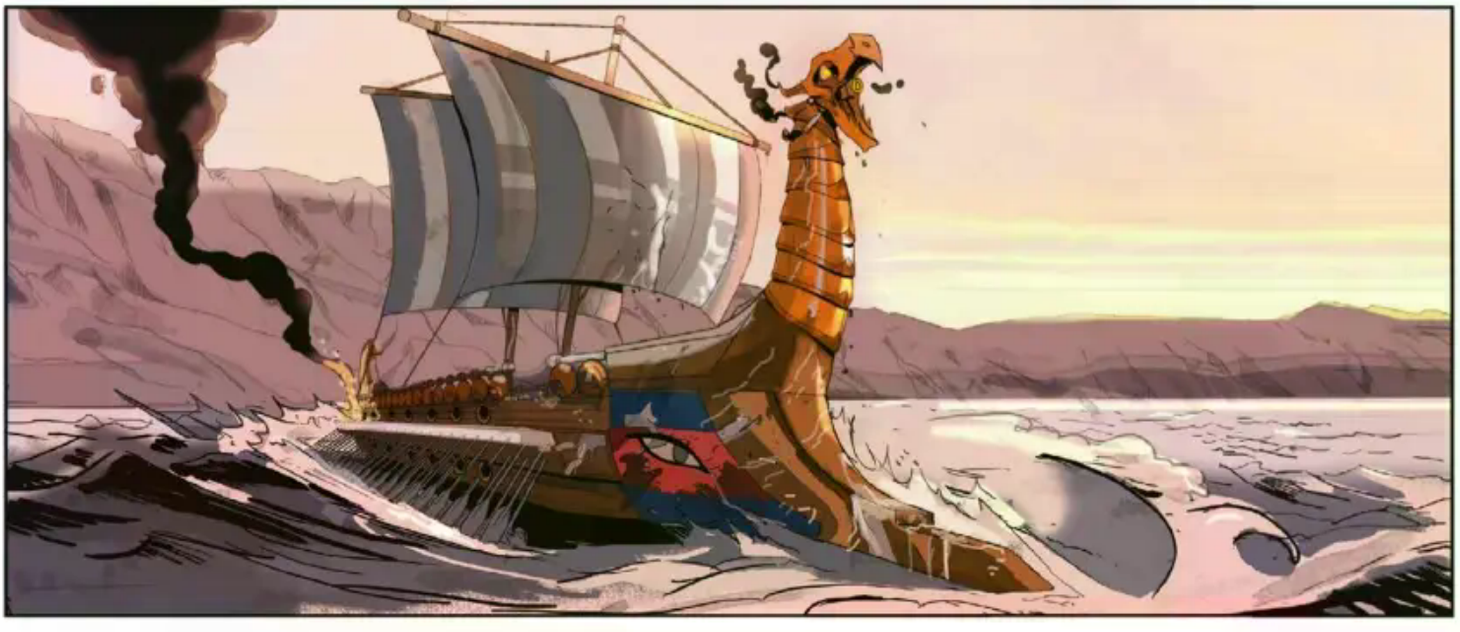
ARION, RIDE!
GRAECI SCUM!

YOU ESCAPED THIS TIME.
BUT THIS ISN'T THE END.

WHO KNOCKED OUT THE SATELLITE?
I WAS RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE OF WATCHING A CAGE MATCH!
GUYS . . . LEO'S COMING AROUND.
. . . WHAT HAPPENED?
YOU TELL US.
DID OCTAVIAN TRICK YOU SOMEHOW? DID HE FRAME YOU, OR–
HE WAS A JERK, BUT HE DIDN'T FIRE ON THE CAMP. I DID.
I MEAN, I DIDN'T WANT TO. BUT I FELT LIKE I WANTED TO. SOMETHING WAS MAKING ME DO IT.
THEN IT COULDN'T HAVE BEEN YOU. IT HAD TO BE SOME SORT OF MAGIC. EITHER OCTAVIAN OR GAEA OR ONE OF HER MINIONS.
BUT UNTIL WE UNDERSTAND WHAT HAPPENED, WE USE THE BUDDY SYSTEM. NOBODY GOES ANYWHERE ALONE.
GRNT SKWEEK
IT'S ALIVE!

RELAX, DUDE. THAT'S *FESTUS*. HE USED TO BE A FULL BRONZE DRAGON, BUT I REVIVED HIM AS A FIGUREHEAD.
HE'S KIND OF THE SHIP'S MAIN INTERFACE NOW.
AND HE SAYS WE'RE GOING DOWN FAST. THE HULL TOOK SOME *CATAPULT SHOTS* THAT NEED REPAIRING OR WE AREN'T GOING TO GET VERY FAR.
YOU *UNDERSTAND* THAT THING?
COMES WITH BEING A CHILD OF HEPHAESTUS. I TALK TO MACHINES.
ΦΕΣΤΥΖ
I'LL NEED SOME MATERIALS TO DO THE REPAIRS.
FESTUS, DO A SCAN FOR SUPPLIES.
GRNT SKWEEK
NO KIDDING? EVERYTHING IN ONE PLACE?
LOOKS LIKE WE'RE GOING TO THE GREAT SALT LAKE IN UTAH.
HANG ON EVERYBODY!
ΦΕΣΤΥΖ
FLIGHT MODE
MODE
ROCKET MODE


THE GREAT SALT LAKE IN UTAH.



LEO, WHAT DO WE NEED TO FIX THE SHIP?
TAR, LIME, AND CELESTIAL BRONZE.

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY INDICATES THE ENTIRE BEACH IS MADE OF CALCIUM CARBONATE. THAT'S OUR LIME. EASY ENOUGH.
WE CAN FIND THE TAR AT A ROOFING SUPPLY IN THE CITY.
CELESTIAL BRONZE IS GOING TO BE THE HARDEST–

I CAN HELP FIND THE CELESTIAL BRONZE.

AS A DAUGHTER OF PLUTO, I CAN SENSE PRECIOUS METALS WHEN THEY'RE NEARBY. SOMETIMES THEY POP RIGHT OUT OF THE GROUND, WHETHER I WANT THEM TO OR NOT.

AND YOU HAVE A SUPER-SPEED HORSE?
HANDY TALENT. LEAD THE WAY, MISS METAL DETECTOR.
YOU AND LEO? BUT . . .

JASON'S STILL OUT. COACH CAN HELP ME TAKE HIM DOWN TO THE SICK BAY.

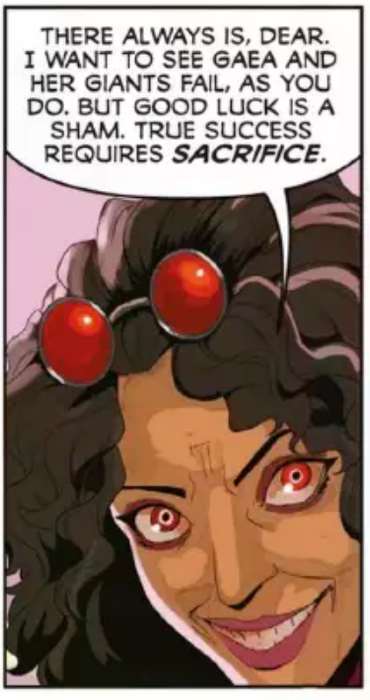
SO THAT LEAVES FRANK, PERCY, AND I TO GET THE TAR. WE'LL MEET YOU BACK HERE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, BUT STAY SAFE.
WE COULD USE SOME GOOD LUCK–

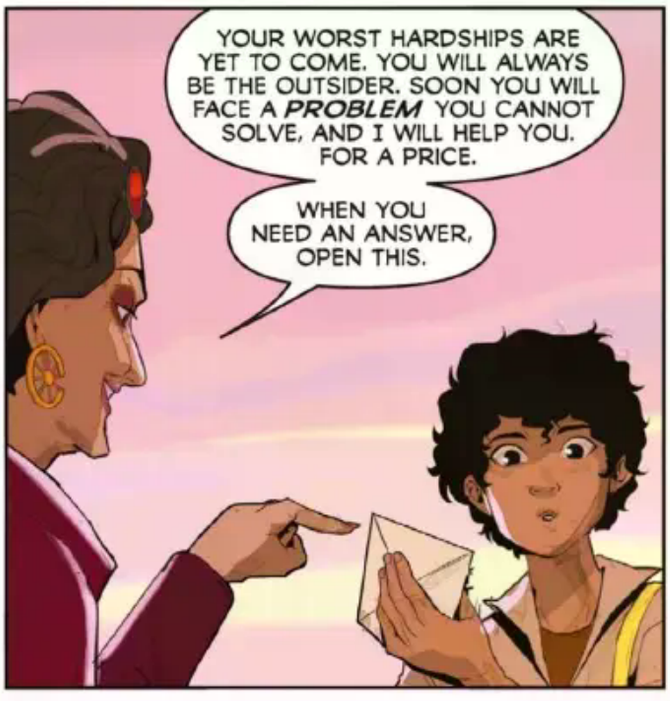
"–BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN WE'LL GET IT."
LIME *PROCURED!*
WHAT ARE YOU STARING AT? MY AWESOME TOOL BELT?
IT'S KIND OF LIKE A BOTTOMLESS PIT OR WHATEVER. I CAN STORE ALL KINDS OF STUFF IN IT.
IT'S NOT THAT. IT'S . . .
YOU LOOK SO MUCH LIKE *SAMMY*. DO YOU HAVE A TWIN BROTHER OR . . . IS YOUR FAMILY FROM NEW ORLEANS?
NAH. HOUSTON.
NOW FOR THE CELESTIAL BRONZE. DON'T THINK WE'LL FIND THAT LYING ON A BEACH . . .
THIS WAY.
I CAN SENSE IT NEAR US-
. . . AUNT ROSA?

IS THAT WHO I LOOK LIKE TO YOU, LEO, DEAR? INTERESTING.
AND YOU, HAZEL LEVESQUE?
YOU–YOU'RE MRS. LEER. MY THIRD-GRADE TEACHER. I HATED YOU.
YOU TAPED MY HANDS TO THE DESK FOR MISBEHAVING. YOU CALLED MY MOTHER A WITCH.
AND LEO'S AUNT ROSA CALLED HIM A DEVIL CHILD. SHE BLAMED HIM FOR THE FIRE THAT KILLED HIS MOTHER.
TURNED HIS FAMILY AGAINST HIM AND LEFT HIM AN ORPHAN.
AUNT ROSA, MRS. LEER . . .
I FEEL THE RESENTMENT BOILING INSIDE YOU BOTH.
YOU'RE NEMESIS.
THE GODDESS OF REVENGE.
"YOU WILL HAVE GREAT FORTUNE WHEN YOU LEAST EXPECT IT."
SEE? THAT'S THE SORT OF NONSENSE I HATE. SOMEONE READS A PAPER, AND SUDDENLY THEY HAVE A PROPHECY THEY'LL BE RICH.
I BLAME TYCHE, ALWAYS DISPENSING GOOD LUCK TO PEOPLE WHO DON'T DESERVE IT.
"YOU WILL DIE PAINFULLY WHEN YOU MOST EXPECT IT."
YES, THAT'S MUCH BETTER.
THAT'S HORRIBLE! YOU'D LET SOMEONE READ THAT IN THEIR FORTUNE, AND IT WOULD COME TRUE?
HAVEN'T YOU EVER WISHED HORRIBLE THINGS ON MRS. LEER FOR THE WAY SHE TREATED YOU?
MAYBE SHE WILL GET SUCH A FORTUNE. BUT SHE'D NEED TO BE WELL PAST ONE HUNDRED YEARS OLD BY NOW, WOULDN'T SHE?
YOU HAD A HUNDRED-YEAR-OLD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHER?
WHAT? NO.
I AM NEMESIS. UNLIKE YOUR GODLY PARENTS, MY NAME IS THE SAME IN BOTH GREEK AND ROMAN. I DO NOT CHANGE BECAUSE REVENGE IS UNIVERSAL.

THE GODS ARE IN TERRIBLE SHAPE. IT ALWAYS HAPPENS WHEN A CIVIL WAR IS BREWING. THE OLYMPIANS ARE *TORN* BETWEEN THEIR TWO NATURES, CALLED ON BY BOTH GREEKS AND ROMANS.
THEY BECOME ERRATIC. *DISORIENTED.*
AND CAN YOU GUESS WHO THE GODS BLAME FOR THEIR PREDICAMENT? *HERA*–OR *JUNO*, IF YOU PREFER.
THE PLAYER WHO SET THIS *RIDICULOUS* QUEST IN MOTION. SHE'S FLED TO OLYMPUS TO ESCAPE THEIR WRATH. SO DON'T EXPECT ANY MORE HELP FROM HER.
ATHENA MINERVA
ZEVS IVPITER
HERA IVNO
ARES MARS
HEPHAESTVS VVLCAN
HADES PLVTO
APHRODITE VENVS
POSEIDON NEPTVNE

SO *I* WILL HELP YOU INSTEAD.
YOU. HELP.
WHY DO I THINK THERE'S A *CATCH*?


THERE ALWAYS IS, DEAR. I WANT TO SEE GAEA AND HER GIANTS FAIL, AS YOU DO. BUT GOOD LUCK IS A SHAM. TRUE SUCCESS REQUIRES *SACRIFICE*.


YOUR WORST HARDSHIPS ARE YET TO COME. YOU WILL ALWAYS BE THE OUTSIDER. SOON YOU WILL FACE A *PROBLEM* YOU CANNOT SOLVE, AND I WILL HELP YOU. FOR A PRICE.
WHEN YOU NEED AN ANSWER, OPEN THIS.

AS FOR YOU, HAZEL, MOST HEROES CANNOT ESCAPE THEIR NATURE, EVEN WHEN GIVEN A *SECOND CHANCE* AT LIFE.
YOU MUST FIND YOUR BROTHER *NICO*. BUT YOU DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME. TODAY IS JUNE TWENTY-FIFTH. SIX MORE DAYS, AND HE DIES, ALONG WITH THE CITY OF ROME.
NICO?! HE WENT SEARCHING FOR THE *DOORS OF DEATH*.
WHAT'S HAPPENED TO HIM?!

IT'S ALL TIED TOGETHER. I MUST BE GOING NOW. YOU SHOULD RUN ALONG. THE BRONZE YOU SEEK IS JUST OVER THAT DUNE.
VISIT THE *REFLECTING POOL* BEFORE THE LIGHT FADES. MY POOR CURSED BOY GETS QUITE *AGITATED* WHEN THE DARKNESS COMES.

HAZEL? YOU ALL RIGHT?
WHAT NEMESIS SAID ABOUT YOUR BROTHER . . .
NICO . . .
HE FOUND ME IN THE UNDERWORLD. HE BROUGHT ME BACK TO THE MORTAL WORLD AND CONVINCED THE ROMANS AT CAMP JUPITER TO ACCEPT ME.
I OWE HIM FOR MY CHANCE TO LIVE AGAIN. IF NEMESIS IS RIGHT AND HE'S IN DANGER, I HAVE TO HELP HIM.

LISTEN, YOU CAN'T TAKE WHAT SHE SAID ABOUT YOU TO HEART.
YOU'RE WITH US. YOU'RE ONE OF THE SEVEN.
YOU'RE NOT AN OUTSIDER. YOU HAVE LOTS OF FRIENDS.
YOU AND FRANK ARE OBVIOUSLY A COUPLE.
ANNABETH IS WITH PERCY, PIPER IS WITH JASON.

I'VE HEARD OF FIFTH WHEELS BEING USELESS. A SEVENTH WHEEL SOUNDS EVEN WORSE.
COME ON. IT'LL BE DARK SOON.

HE IS SOOOO HOT!
I'M SO GLAD HE'S ALIVE AGAIN!
HE'S THE BEST!
HIS LATEST YOUTUBE VIDEO GOT A MILLION HITS IN LIKE, AN HOUR!
I WAS HALF OF THOSE!

WELL, THIS ISN'T WEIRD AT ALL.
. . . HE'S GORGEOUS.

DOESN'T ANYONE CARE ABOUT PERSONALITY ANYMORE?
YOU KNOW, A SENSE OF HUMOR AND A CHARMING WIT?

MARRY ME, NARCISSUS!
NO! MARRY ME!

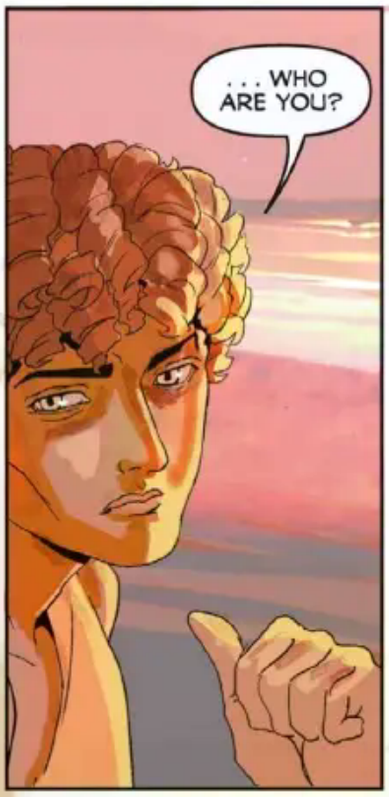
GUESS NOT.
WAIT . . . NARCISSUS. REMEMBER THE MYTH, LEO?

HE WAS A MORTAL. A PRINCE AND A GIFTED HUNTER. NEMESIS CURSED HIM BECAUSE HE BROKE SO MANY HEARTS.
HIS PUNISHMENT WAS TO FALL IN LOVE WITH HIS OWN REFLECTION. HE DIED STARING AT HIMSELF.
AT THE BOTTOM OF THE POND.
LOOK.
THAT'S A SHEET OF CELESTIAL BRONZE. IT'S JUST ENOUGH FOR ME TO DO THE REPAIRS ON THE SHIP.
YOUR POWER WITH PRECIOUS METALS–CAN YOU JUST DETECT IT, OR CAN YOU SUMMON IT TO YOU THROUGH THE GROUND?
I MIGHT BE ABLE TO DRAW A PIECE THAT BIG THROUGH THE EARTH, BUT IT'D TAKE A LOT OF CONCENTRATION.
OKAY, HERE'S WHAT WE'RE GOING TO DO . . .

"LET'S HOPE WE DON'T *DIE*."
I LOVE ME SO, *SO* MUCH.
SIGN MY POSTER!
SIGN MY *FOREHEAD*!
SIGN MY SHIRT!

NO AUTOGRAPHS, LADIES. I KNOW YOU WANT SOME LEO TIME, BUT I'M *WAY* TOO COOL.
LEO IS THE *COOLEST*!
YOU BETTER JUST HANG WITH THAT UGLY *DWEEB* NARCISSUS.

MAKE WAY FOR THE *KING*, NYMPH LADIES.
THE KING!
TEAM LEO
HOT STUFF
OH YEAH!!
PQR


. . . WHO ARE YOU?

I'M *LEO VALDEZ*, BAD BOY SUPREME. AND THE LADIES *LOVE* A BAD BOY.
KNOW WHY YOUR BOW HAS COBWEBS?
YOU USED TO HUNT FOR DATES, BUT YOU CAN'T FIND ONE.
TEAM LEO
OH YEAH!!
BECAUSE HE'S *WEAK*!

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I AM AMAZING. EVERYONE KNOWS THIS.
AMAZING AT *PURE SUCK*!
HE *IS* KIND OF FUNNY.
AND SORT OF CUTE, I GUESS. IN A *SCRAWNY* WAY.
TEAM LEO
L<3N
BABY, SCRAWNY IS THE NEW *BUFF*. AND *I GOT* THE SCRAWNY!
NARCISSUS? HE'S SUCH A *LOSER* EVEN THE UNDERWORLD DIDN'T WANT HIM. NO *GHOST GIRLS* WOULD DATE HIM!
EWW.
IS THAT TRUE?
STOP! THIS IS NOT RIGHT!
THIS PERSON IS OBVIOUSLY *NOT* AWESOME, SO HE MUST BE . . .
. . . HE MUST BE *TRICKING* US.
THE *BRONZE MIRROR* IS GONE!

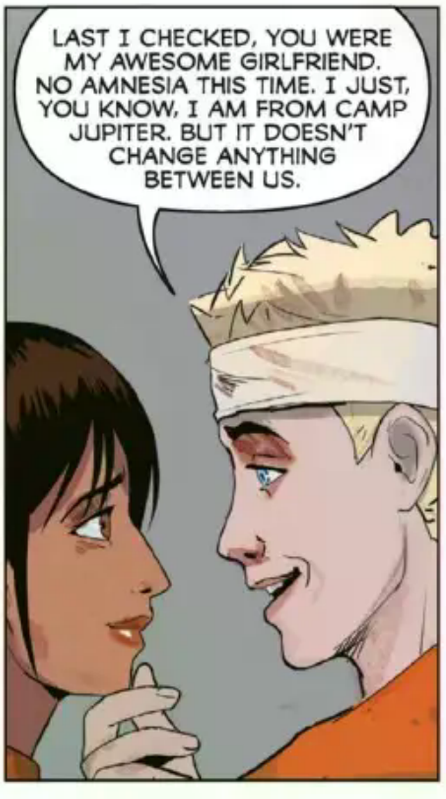
MY REFLECTION! GIVE IT BACK TO ME!
I AM THE BEAUTIFUL ONE!
TEAM LEO
FOOOOSH
YEEEAAAHH!

EASTBOUND OVER THE MIDWEST.

. . . PIPER?
-GASP-

YOU'RE AWAKE!
DON'T SOUND SO SURPRISED.

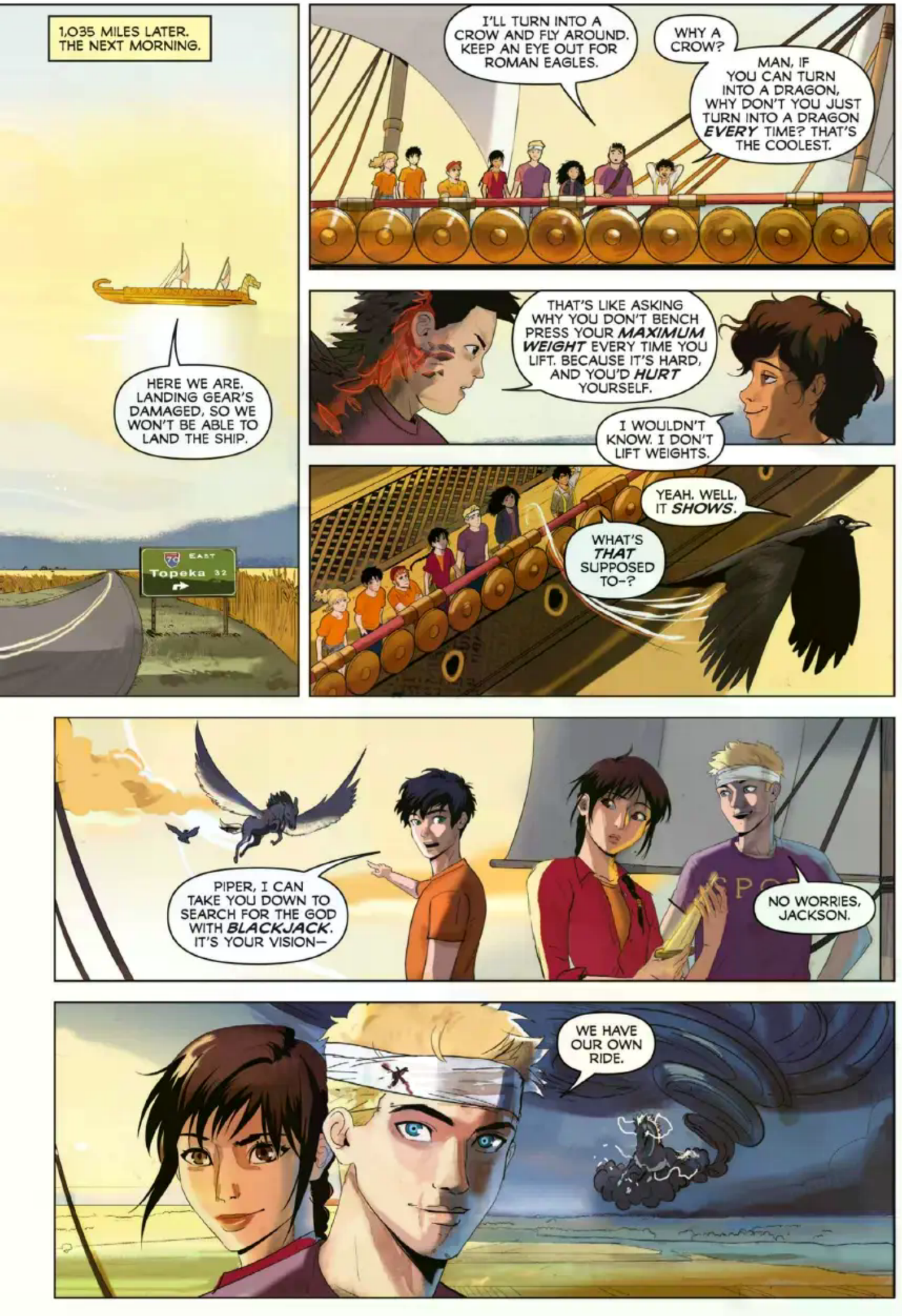
WHAT . . . WHAT HAPPENED? I REMEMBER THE EXPLOSIONS, AND–
YOU REMEMBER WHO I AM?


LAST I CHECKED, YOU WERE MY AWESOME GIRLFRIEND. NO AMNESIA THIS TIME. I JUST, YOU KNOW, I AM FROM CAMP JUPITER. BUT IT DOESN'T CHANGE ANYTHING BETWEEN US.

WELL, IF YOU'RE FEELING BETTER, WE SHOULD HEAD UP TO THE DECK.
LEO HAS THE SHIP FIXED AND UNDERWAY.
SICK BAY

WHERE ARE WE?
HEADING EAST AS FAST AS WE CAN.
GAEA IS RISING, AND RADAR IS SHOWING THE ROMANS ON OUR TAIL. WE HAVE TO GET TO THE ANCIENT LANDS.
WE SHOULD START WITH ELLA'S PROPHECY. "WISDOM'S DAUGHTER WALKS ALONE. THE MARK OF ATHENA BURNS THROUGH ROME."
THAT'S GOT TO MEAN YOU, ANNABETH. ANY IDEAS?
REYNA SAID THERE'S AN OLD LEGEND–SOMETHING TO DO WITH ATHENA. IT MIGHT BE THE REASON GREEKS AND ROMANS COULD NEVER GET ALONG.
SHE WAS ABOUT TO TELL ME MORE, BUT THEN THE *ARGO II* OPENED FIRE.
SORRY ABOUT THAT . . .
I'M GOING TO NEED A SPECIFIC HEADING HERE. ANYONE KNOW WHERE TO START?
PIPER, DO YOU THINK YOUR DAGGER MIGHT HAVE AN ANSWER FOR WHERE WE NEED TO GO?
I CAN TRY—
—NOT THAT *KATOPTRIS* EVER SHOWS EXACTLY WHAT I ASK IT TO.
I'M SEEING TWIN GIANTS SEALING A JAR. THERE'S A *BOY* TRAPPED INSIDE.
A BOY IN BLACK . . .

THAT'S MY BROTHER, NICO! WE HAVE TO HURRY.
WAIT. NICO? NICO *DI ANGELO*?
HE'S YOUR *BROTHER*?
AT LEAST WE KNOW WHAT THE LINES OF THE PROPHECY MEAN NOW. "TWINS SNUFF OUT THE ANGEL'S BREATH, WHO HOLDS THE KEY TO ENDLESS DEATH."
NICO'S LAST NAME: DI ANGELO. ANGELO IS ITALIAN FOR "ANGEL."
LEO AND I RAN INTO NEMESIS. SHE SAID WE ONLY HAVE *SIX DAYS* UNTIL NICO DIES AND ROME IS DESTROYED.
LOOK AGAIN, PLEASE. DOES IT SHOW WHERE WE CAN FIND HIM?
I'M SEEING A VISION . . .
IT LOOKS CLOUDY, LIKE A HIGHWAY MILE MARKER.
70
EAST
Topeka 32
LEO, HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT NAVIGATING US TO *KANSAS*?


1,035 MILES LATER. THE NEXT MORNING.
HERE WE ARE. LANDING GEAR'S DAMAGED, SO WE WON'T BE ABLE TO LAND THE SHIP.
EAST
70
Topeka 32
I'LL TURN INTO A CROW AND FLY AROUND. KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR ROMAN EAGLES.
WHY A CROW?
MAN, IF YOU CAN TURN INTO A DRAGON, WHY DON'T YOU JUST TURN INTO A DRAGON *EVERY* TIME? THAT'S THE COOLEST.
THAT'S LIKE ASKING WHY YOU DON'T BENCH PRESS YOUR *MAXIMUM WEIGHT* EVERY TIME YOU LIFT. BECAUSE IT'S HARD, AND YOU'D *HURT* YOURSELF.
I WOULDN'T KNOW. I DON'T LIFT WEIGHTS.
YEAH. WELL, IT *SHOWS*.
WHAT'S *THAT* SUPPOSED TO-?
PIPER, I CAN TAKE YOU DOWN TO SEARCH FOR THE GOD WITH *BLACKJACK*. IT'S YOUR VISION—
NO WORRIES, JACKSON.
WE HAVE OUR OWN RIDE.

NICE RIDE, JASON.
TEMPEST IS A FREE SPIRIT, LITERALLY. BUT ONCE IN A WHILE HE AGREES TO HELP ME.

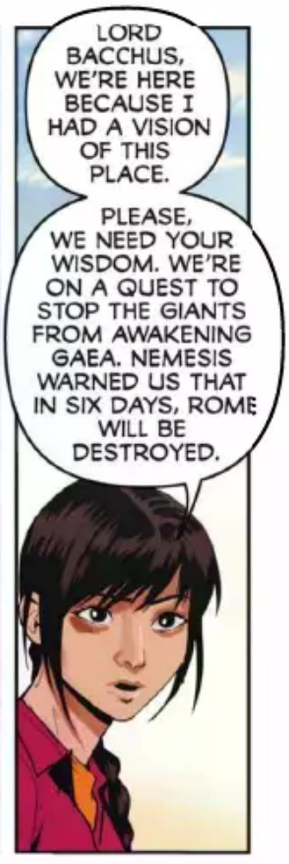
THIS IS THE ROAD SIGN I SAW IN MY VISION.
OKAY. SO . . . WHAT NOW?
70 EAST
Topeka 32

WHERE IS *CERES*?
70 EAST
Topeka 32
SHE ASKED ME HERE FOR A COUNCIL OF WAR.
WHAT WITH *GAEA* RISING, THE CROPS ARE WITHERING.
DROUGHTS ARE SPREADING. EVEN MY *GRAPES* AREN'T SAFE.
CERES WANTS A UNITED FRONT AMONG PLANTS.

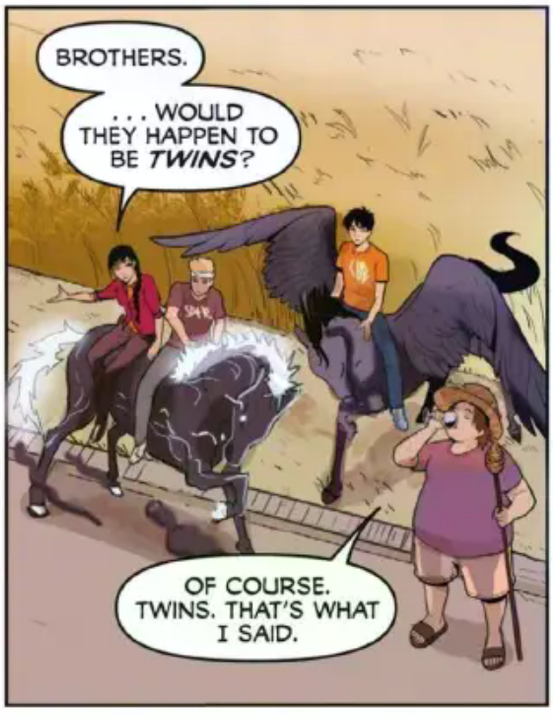
LORD BACCHUS. DO YOU REMEMBER ME? WE'VE MET BEFORE.
AH . . . YES. JOHN GREEN.
JASON GRACE.
THAT, TOO.
BACCHUS? AT CAMP HALF-BLOOD, I KNOW YOU AS MR. D.
DIONYSUS.

AAGH!
STOP THAT! STOP THINKING ABOUT ME IN GREEK!

DO YOU KNOW HOW HARD IT IS TO STAY FOCUSED? SPLITTING HEADACHES ALL THE TIME! I NEVER KNOW WHAT I'M DOING OR WHERE I'M GOING!
SOUNDS PRETTY NORMAL FOR YOU.


LORD BACCHUS, WE'RE HERE BECAUSE I HAD A VISION OF THIS PLACE.
PLEASE, WE NEED YOUR WISDOM. WE'RE ON A QUEST TO STOP THE GIANTS FROM AWAKENING GAEA. NEMESIS WARNED US THAT IN SIX DAYS, ROME WILL BE DESTROYED.

GAEA'S CHILDREN, THE GIANTS. -TSK- I KNOW THEM WELL. I FOUGHT IN THE FIRST GIANT WAR. I WAS A DEMIGOD MYSELF BACK THEN. THE SON OF JUPITER.
THAT WAS LONG BEFORE I INVENTED WINE AND BECAME IMMORTAL. I KILLED THE GIANT EPHIALTES AND HIS BROTHER OTIS. HORRIBLE BOORS, THOSE TWO.


BROTHERS.
. . . WOULD THEY HAPPEN TO BE TWINS?
OF COURSE. TWINS. THAT'S WHAT I SAID.

YOU MUST BE PART OF OUR QUEST!
"TWINS SNUFF OUT THE ANGEL'S BREATH."
GIANTS CAN ONLY BE KILLED BY HEROES AND GODS WORKING TOGETHER. YOU'RE A GOD NOW, AND THE TWO GIANTS WE HAVE TO FIGHT ARE TWINS. I THINK . . . I THINK EPHIALTES AND OTIS ARE WAITING FOR US IN ROME.

MY GIRL, I ONLY HELP THOSE WHO GIVE ME PROPER TRIBUTE, WHICH NO ONE HAS MANAGED TO DO IN MANY, MANY CENTURIES.
WHAT KIND OF TRIBUTE?
NOTHING *YOU* COULD HANDLE, INSOLENT GREEK.
HOW ABOUT A HINT?
HOW ABOUT FREE ADVICE INSTEAD? GO TO *FORT SUMTER* IN CHARLESTON.
THERE'S A *HIDDEN MAP* THAT MAY HELP YOU ON YOUR QUEST.
NOW I'LL GET BACK TO *MY* BUSINESS.
IT'S UNLIKE CERES TO BE LATE, UNLESS SHE SENSED SOMETHING *DANGEROUS* IN THIS AREA. OR . . .
. . . OR A *TRAP*.
WELL, I MUST BE GOING! IF I WERE YOU, I'D DO THE SAME!
LORD BACCHUS, *WAIT*!
POP!
GREAT.
MAN, THAT DUDE IS ANNOYING IN *TWO* LANGUAGES.
MAYBE BACCHUS IS RIGHT. WE SHOULD *LEAVE*–
TOO LATE, DAUGHTER OF APHRODITE.
WELCOME TO MY PARTY.

GAEA!
STOP HIDING! SHOW YOURSELF!
SUCH BRAVADO, JASON GRACE. THOUGH PERCY JACKSON ALSO HAS APPEAL.
I NEED THE BLOOD OF ONLY TWO DEMIGODS TO COMPLETE MY PLAN– THE BLOOD OF A FEMALE AND THE BLOOD OF A MALE.
CHOOSE, PIPER MCLEAN.
I WON'T CHOOSE ANYTHING FOR YOU!
THEN I WILL.
ONE WILL DIE.
I WILL CHOOSE.

NO!
YOU'RE FRIENDS!
DROP YOUR WEAPONS!

KRAKKOOM
WE CANNOT STOP . . . ONE MUST DIE . . .
. . . WE ARE THE EIDOLONS . . . WE WILL LIVE AGAIN.
SPQR
KLANG!
KZZZZ
ONE MUST DIE!
SPQR

ZZZATT
YOU MUST CHOOSE ONE. WHY NOT LET JASON KILL HIM?
JASON, DON'T!
YOU CANNOT STOP ME.

SWAK
KONK
YOU HAVE NOT CHOSEN, PIPER MCLEAN. SO THIS ONE WILL DIE.
I WILL KILL JASON GRACE.
I WILL LIVE AGAIN IN THIS BODY. GAEA, THE EARTH MOTHER, HAS PROMISED. I WILL GO WHERE I PLEASE. CONTROL WHOM I WISH.
TOO LATE YOU REALIZE. YOU CAN TRUST NO ONE-

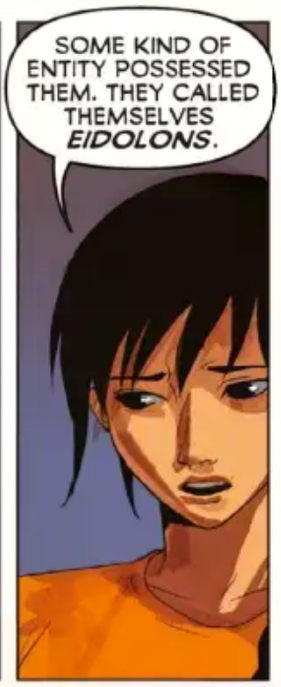
YOU WON'T KILL HIM! YOU WILL KNOCK HIM OUT!
I . . . I WILL KNOCK HIM OUT?
CLUDD
OH, SORRY. I WASN'T TALKING TO YOU.

LATER.

KNOCKED OUT *TWICE* IN TWO DAYS.
SOME DEMIGOD.
I DIDN'T DO MUCH BETTER.
AT THIS RATE, WE'RE GOING TO RUN OUT OF MEDICAL SUPPLIES. *YOU* CUPCAKES NEED TO KEEP YOUR *HEADS* IN THE *GAME!*

COACH HEDGE, WHY DON'T YOU SET COURSE FOR CHARLESTON? I'LL EXPLAIN LATER.
ALL RIGHT, BUT I *BETTER* GET INVITED ON THE NEXT VIOLENT EXCURSION.

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU TWO OUT THERE?
I'M NOT SURE.
THE MEMORIES ARE FUZZY.
1


SOME KIND OF ENTITY POSSESSED THEM. THEY CALLED THEMSELVES *EIDOLONS*.

OF COURSE! SPIRITS FROM THE *UNDERWORLD*.
THAT MUST BE WHAT HAPPENED TO LEO, TOO.
SO I DIDN'T START WORLD WAR THREE. I JUST GOT POSSESSED BY AN *EVIL SPIRIT*.
THAT'S A RELIEF.

UNFORTUNATELY, THE ROMANS DON'T KNOW THAT. AND WHY WOULD THEY TAKE *OUR* WORD FOR IT?
WE COULD CONTACT REYNA. SHE'D BELIEVE US.
OCTAVIAN IS THE ONE WE HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT. WHEN HAZEL AND I WERE SCOUTING, WE SAW EAGLES AGAIN. OCTAVIAN IS ON THE WARPATH.
IF REYNA OBJECTS, HE'LL SAY SHE'S SOFT ON GREEKS.
THIS IS *EXACTLY* THE SORT OF OPPORTUNITY HE'S ALWAYS WANTED. HE'LL TRY TO SEIZE POWER.
WE SHOULD JUST KEEP GOING. ONCE WE'RE OVER THE ATLANTIC, WE'LL BE SAFE FROM THE LEGION.
ROMAN DEMIGODS HAVE BEEN FORBIDDEN FROM GOING TO THE *ANCIENT LANDS* FOR GENERATIONS.
EVEN OCTAVIAN CAN'T GET AROUND THAT RULE.
BUT, LIKE, YOU, ME, AND HAZEL ARE ROMANS. AND PERCY, SORT OF. SO, IF WE GO THERE . . .
WE'LL BE *OUTLAWS* AS WELL AS *TRAITORS*. ANY ROMAN DEMIGOD WOULD HAVE THE RIGHT TO KILL US ON SIGHT.
YOU, SIR, ARE A RAY OF SUNSHINE.
BACCHUS NAMED THE *TWIN GIANTS* FROM MY VISION: *EPHIALTES AND OTIS*.
I REMEMBER A STORY ABOUT TWIN GIANTS. THEY TRIED TO REACH MOUNT OLYMPUS BY PILING UP MOUNTAINS.
WHAT ARE *THEY* DOING TO HELP GAEA?
SHE WANTS TWO OF US.

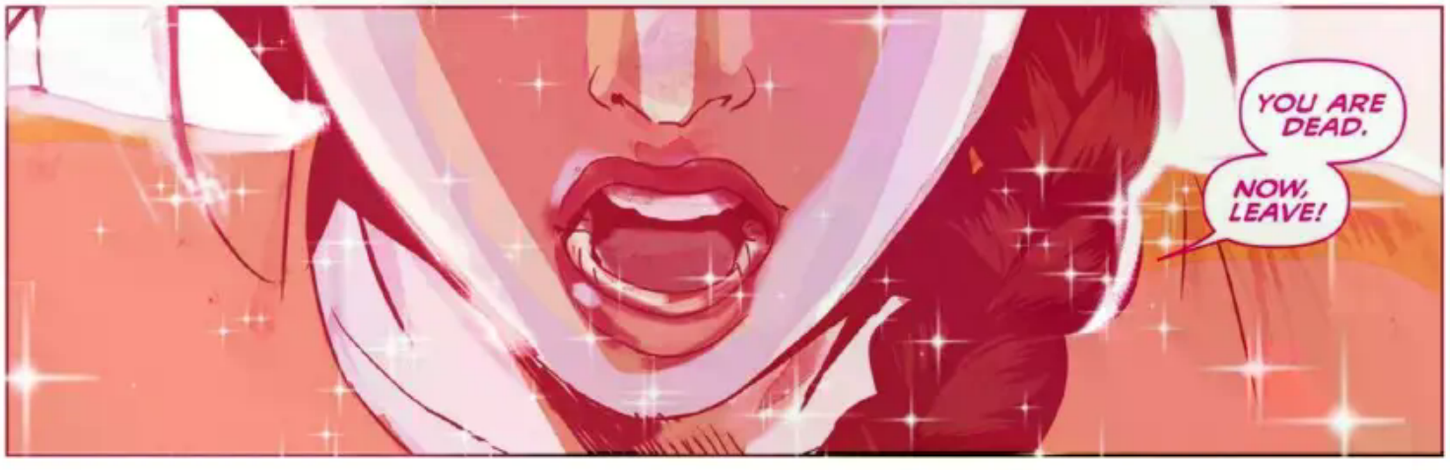
GAEA SAID SHE NEEDED THE BLOOD OF TWO DEMIGODS– ONE FEMALE, ONE MALE.
SHE WANTED ME TO CHOOSE WHICH BETWEEN PERCY AND JASON WOULD DIE.
WHY WOULD SHE WANT THAT?
MAYBE DEMIGOD BLOOD HAS SOME KIND OF POWER.
UNTIL WE FIGURE IT OUT, I SUGGEST WE AVOID GETTING CAPTURED.
THAT I AGREE WITH.
PIPER, YOU TOLD COACH HEDGE TO SAIL FOR CHARLESTON. WHAT'S THERE?
BACCHUS SAID THERE'S A MAP. I THINK IT MIGHT HAVE TO DO WITH THE MARK OF ATHENA.
THEN THAT'S OUR NEXT STOP. WE WON'T GET THERE UNTIL TOMORROW. I SUGGEST WE GET SOME REST.
ASSUMING NOTHING ELSE GOES WRONG.
WAIT.
. . . PIPES? YOU OKAY?
A FEELING. LIKE ONE I HAD BEFORE YOU AND PERCY ATTACKED EACH OTHER.
THE EIDOLONS.
THEY'RE IN THIS ROOM.

WHAT?!
WHERE?
PIPER. ARE YOU SURE?
SHE'S RIGHT.
I'VE MET EIDOLONS. IN THE UNDERWORLD, WHEN I WAS . . . YOU KNOW. DEAD.
THEY MAY BE LURKING ON THE SHIP. OR POSSIBLY . . . INSIDE US.
I THINK . . . I THINK I CAN DO THIS. EVERYBODY JUST LISTEN, OKAY?
EIDOLONS, RAISE YOUR HANDS.
I AM APHRODITE'S DAUGHTER! MY WORDS ARE PERSUASION!
DID YOU REALLY THINK YOUR CHARMSPEAK WAS GOING TO–
WAGH!

ARE THERE MORE OF YOU ON THIS SHIP?
THE EARTH MOTHER SENT THREE. THE STRONGEST, THE BEST.
WE WILL LIVE AGAIN.
YOU DO NOT BELONG HERE.
DAUGHTER OF PLUTO, YOU MAY CONTROL GEMS AND METALS, BUT YOU DO NOT CONTROL THE DEAD.
SPOR
SPOR

YOU WILL LISTEN TO ME.
LEAVE THOSE BODIES. VOW ON THE RIVER STYX NEVER TO RETURN TO THIS SHIP, AND NEVER TO POSSESS ANY MEMBER OF THIS CREW.
HSSS.
N-NEVER.
W-WE WILL L-LIVE AGAIN!

YOU WILL PROMISE ON THE RIVER STYX!


YOU ARE DEAD.
NOW, LEAVE!

WE PROMISE ON THE RIVER STYX.
SPQR

WMMP
WMMP
WMMP

DID IT WORK?
IT WORKED.
I DON'T THINK THEY'LL BE BACK.
DOES THIS MEAN I CAN STOP GETTING HEAD INJURIES NOW?
SPQR

OKAY, THEY'VE HAD ENOUGH FOR ONE DAY.
COME ON, LIGHTNING BOY. LET'S GET YOU SOME FRESH AIR.

THANKS, PIPES. YOU SAVED ME AGAIN.
COACH HEDGE
ANNABETH
JASON . . . ON THE HIGHWAY. YOU COULD'VE KILLED PERCY. I THOUGHT ABOUT *LETTING* YOU.
GAEA SAID I HAD TO CHOOSE. IF TWO OF OUR CREW REALLY HAVE TO DIE, A BOY AND A GIRL . . .
I DON'T ACCEPT THAT. WE'RE GOING TO STOP GAEA.
SPQR
ALL SEVEN OF US ARE GOING TO COME BACK ALIVE. I PROMISE YOU.
PIPER
"AN OATH TO KEEP WITH A FINAL BREATH."
DON'T PROMISE, JASON. I DON'T WANT IT TO BE *YOUR* FINAL BREATH.
JASON
JASON? WHAT'S WRONG?
THE LEGEND ANNABETH MENTIONED. THE *MARK OF ATHENA*. I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S TRUE AND WHAT'S NOT.
BUT IT COULD BE REALLY DANGEROUS. FOR *ALL* OF US.

THE STORY I'VE HEARD GOES THAT THE ROMANS STOLE SOMETHING *IMPORTANT* FROM THE GREEKS, BACK IN ANCIENT TIMES.
THIS THING– WHATEVER IT WAS–WAS TAKEN AWAY TO ROME AND HIDDEN THERE. THE CHILDREN OF ATHENA HAVE *HATED* US EVER SINCE.
THEY'VE BEEN SEARCHING FOR THIS THING FOR *MILLENNIA*. EVERY GENERATION, A FEW ARE CHOSEN BY THE GODDESS TO FIND IT.
THEY'RE LED TO ROME BY A SIGN. THE MARK OF ATHENA.
YOU SHOULD TELL ANNABETH. IF SHE'S ONE OF THOSE SEARCHERS, WE SHOULD HELP HER.
WHEN WE GET CLOSER TO ROME, I'LL TELL HER WHAT LITTLE I KNOW.
BUT THE STORY CLAIMS THAT IF THE GREEKS EVER FOUND WHAT WAS STOLEN, THEY'D NEVER FORGIVE US.
THEY'D DESTROY THE LEGION AND ROME, ONCE AND FOR ALL.
. . . PIPER?
PQR
"US." YOU SAID "US." YOU STILL THINK OF YOURSELF AS A ROMAN.
LIKE YOU WANT TO LEAVE ME AND GO BACK TO CAMP JUPITER.
THAT WOULD NEVER HAPPEN. NOT UNLESS YOU CAME WITH ME.
I PROMISE.
GET SOME SLEEP. ANNABETH'S RIGHT.
WE ALL NEED TO REST.
PERCY

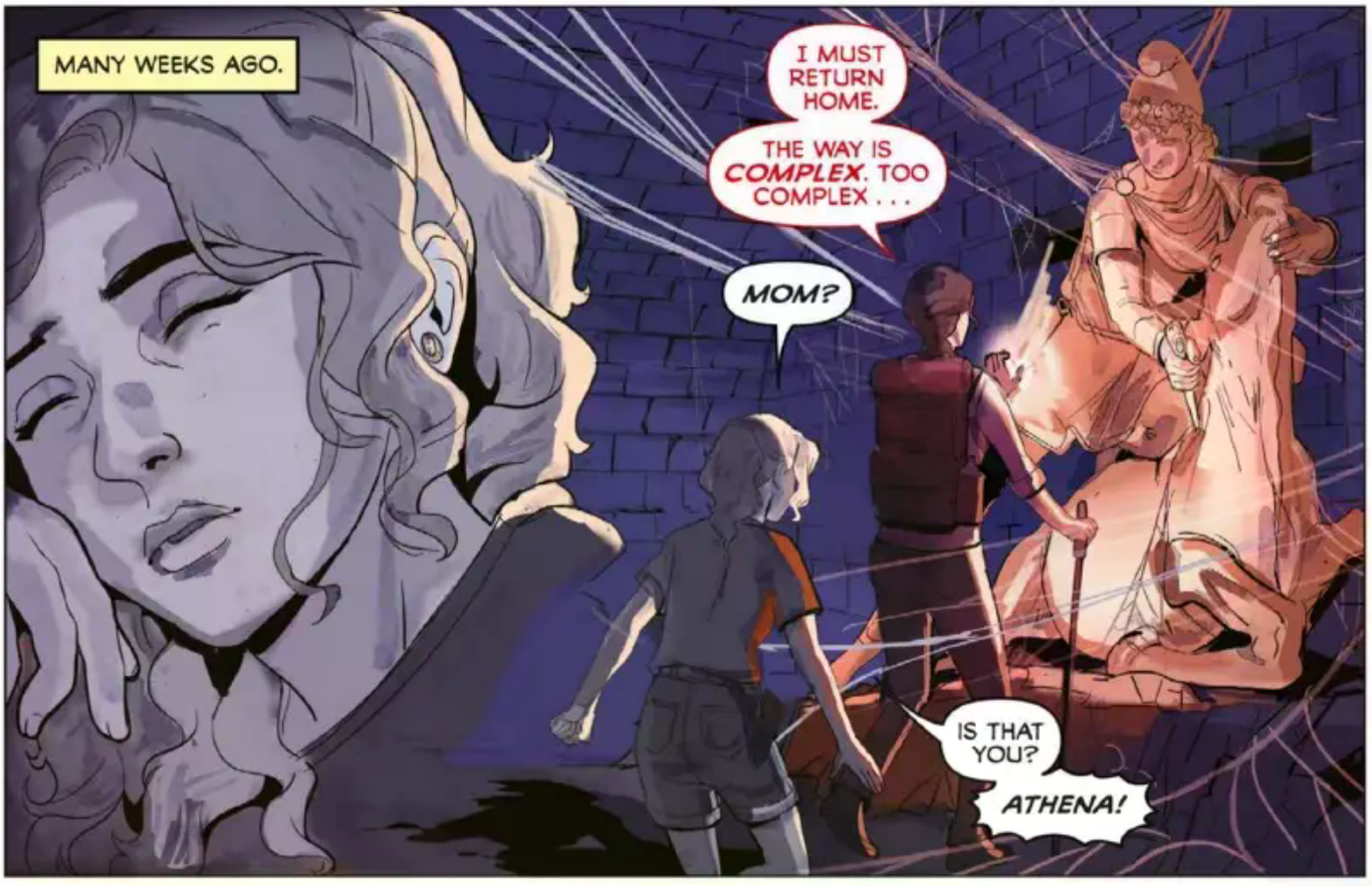
THIS THING. A JAR? IT DOESN'T DO ANYTHING. IT ISN'T EXCITING, OTIS.
THE JAR ISN'T THE POINT OF THE SHOW, EPHIALTES.
THE POINT IS, OUR PRISONER RUNS OUT OF BREATH AND DIES UNLESS THE OTHERS RESCUE HIM.
COULDN'T WE SUSPEND IT ABOVE FIRE, OR DISSOLVE IT IN A POOL OF ACID OR SOMETHING?
WE JUST NEED HIM ALIVE FOR A FEW MORE DAYS. OTHERWISE, THEY WON'T TAKE THE BAIT AND RUSH TO SAVE HIM.
AND IF THEY ARRIVE ON SCHEDULE–
OH, THEY BETTER! JULY FIRST, THE KALENDS OF JULY. SACRED TO JUNO.
THAT'S WHEN MOTHER WANTS TO DESTROY THOSE STUPID DEMIGODS AND ROME ITSELF JUST TO RUB IT IN JUNO'S FACE.
WHAT ABOUT OUR FRIEND? THE WEAVER?
IS SHE READY TO RECEIVE HER VISITOR?
SHE'S BEEN READY FOR CENTURES. NO ONE WILL BE REMOVING THE PARTHENOS FROM HER WEB.

EXCELLENT. WE WILL SET A NEW STANDARD FOR ENTERTAINMENT.
IF MOTHER IS PLEASED, WE CAN WRITE OUR OWN TICKET TO FAME AND FORTUNE!
PERCY. WAKE UP!
WHAT TIME IS IT? YOU SHOULDN'T BE IN MY ROOM AFTER DARK.
PERCY, YOU'LL BE SEVENTEEN IN TWO MONTHS.
YOU CAN'T SERIOUSLY BE WORRIED ABOUT GETTING INTO TROUBLE WITH COACH HEDGE.
UH, HAVE YOU SEEN HIS BASEBALL BAT?
BESIDES, SEAWEED BRAIN, I JUST THOUGHT WE COULD TAKE A WALK. WE HAVEN'T HAD ANY TIME TO BE TOGETHER ALONE. I WANT TO SHOW YOU SOMETHING–MY FAVORITE PLACE ABOARD THE SHIP.
CAN I, YOU KNOW, BRUSH MY TEETH FIRST?
PERCY
YOU'D BETTER, BECAUSE I'M NOT KISSING YOU UNTIL YOU DO. AND BRUSH YOUR HAIR WHILE YOU'RE AT IT.

LEO BUILT THE STABLES SO PEGASI COULD COME AND GO EASILY.
. . . ONLY HE DIDN'T REALIZE THAT PEGASI PREFER TO ROAM FREE, SO THE STABLES ARE ALWAYS EMPTY.
STORAGE
STORAGE
ENGINE ROOM
WOULDN'T A PEGASUS HAVE TO MAKE IT DOWN TWO FLIGHTS OF STAIRS?
THESE ARE BAY DOORS, LIKE ON A BOMBER.
BLACK JACK
PORKPIE
CHIRON
TEMPEST
YOU MEAN WE'RE SITTING ON DOORS? WHAT IF THEY OPENED?
I SUPPOSE WE'D FALL TO OUR DEATHS. BUT THEY WON'T OPEN. MOST LIKELY.
GREAT.

YOU KNOW WHY I LIKE IT HERE? IT REMINDS ME OF THE ZOO TRUCK. THE ONE WE TOOK TO LAS VEGAS DURING OUR FIRST QUEST. SEARCHING FOR THAT STUPID LIGHTNING BOLT.
IT WAS THE FIRST TIME WE REALLY TALKED, YOU AND ME. WE WERE *TWELVE*? CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT?
I BET YOU LIKED ME EVEN BACK THEN.
I HATED YOU AT FIRST. THEN I *TOLERATED* YOU FOR A FEW YEARS. THEN . . .
I MISSED YOU, PERCY.
WHEN JUNO WIPED MY MEMORIES AND DROPPED ME OFF AT CAMP JUPITER, THE ONLY THING I REMEMBERED WAS YOU.
I KEPT MYSELF *ALIVE* THINKING ABOUT YOU.
IN NEW ROME, DEMIGODS CAN LIVE THEIR WHOLE LIVES IN PEACE. TOGETHER.
THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT OF. ME AND YOU. LIKE THAT.
. . . WE MAY HAVE *BURNED* THAT BRIDGE, IF WE CAN'T REPAIR THINGS WITH THE ROMANS.
I WAS HAVING A *NIGHTMARE* BEFORE I WOKE UP. THERE WERE TWO GIANTS, AND THEY HAD A BRONZE JAR. INSIDE THE JAR . . .
. . . IT WAS *NICO*. THEY'RE HOLDING HIM SOMEWHERE IN ROME.
SOMEWHERE UNDERGROUND. THEY SAID SOMETHING ABOUT THE FIRST OF JULY.

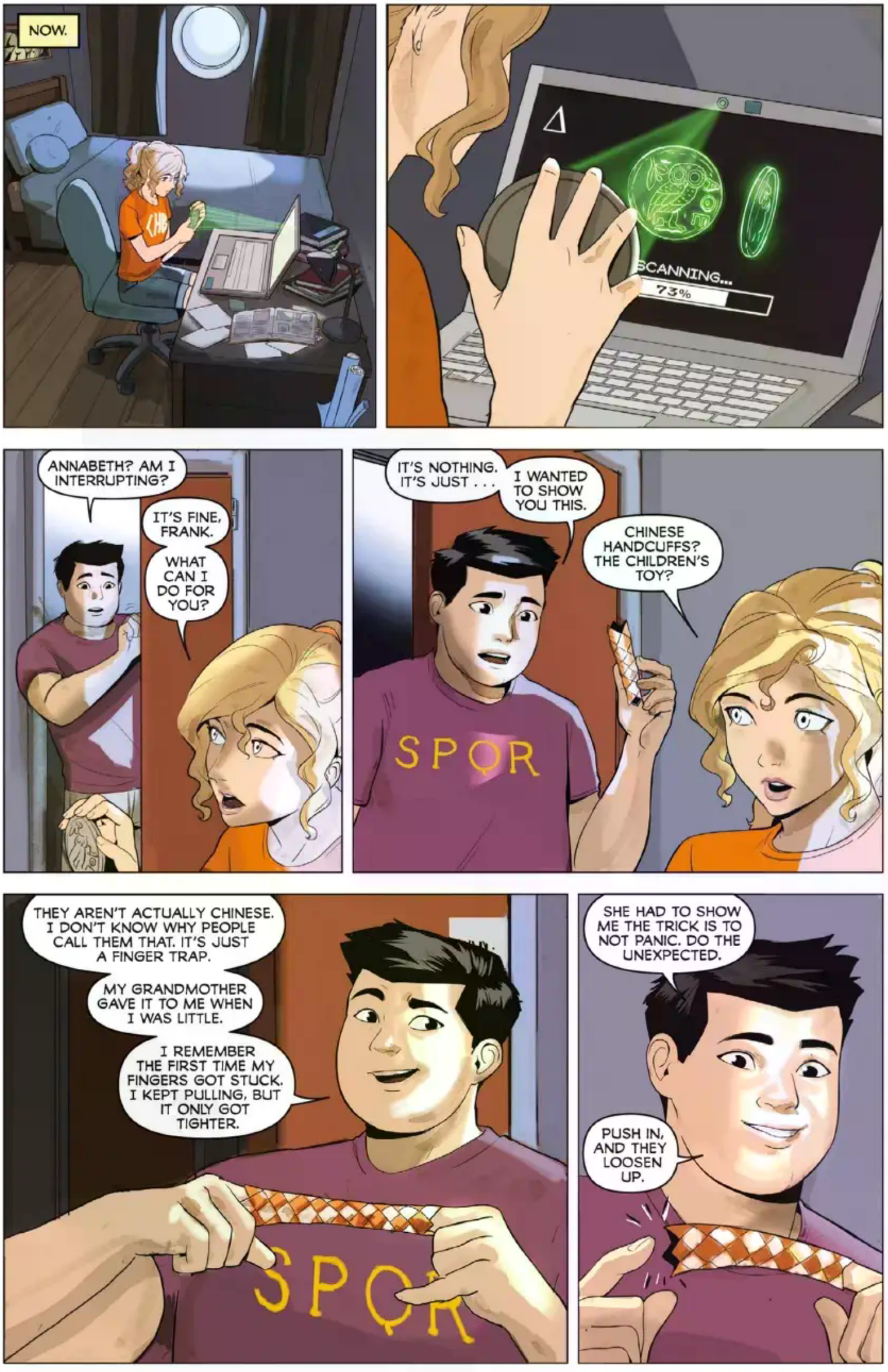
GAEA'S FORCES MUST'VE CAPTURED HIM SOMEHOW. JULY FIRST IS ONLY FIVE DAYS FROM NOW.
WE SHOULD TELL HAZEL. BUT NOT NOW. I DON'T WANT TO HIT HER WITH THIS NEWS IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT.
PERCY . . . I'VE BEEN HAVING NIGHTMARES OF MY OWN.
THE LAST TIME I SAW MY MOTHER, SHE DIDN'T LOOK GOOD. MAYBE IT'S THE GREEK/ROMAN SCHIZOPHRENIA.
SHE SAID SOME HURTFUL THINGS. SHE SAID I *FAILED* HER.
FAILED HER? YOU'RE EVERYTHING A DAUGHTER OF ATHENA SHOULD BE.
LET'S GET SOME SLEEP. MAYBE WE WON'T HAVE NIGHTMARES IF WE'RE TOGETHER.
WHAT ABOUT COACH HEDGE'S BASEBALL BAT?
I'M WILLING TO RISK IT.

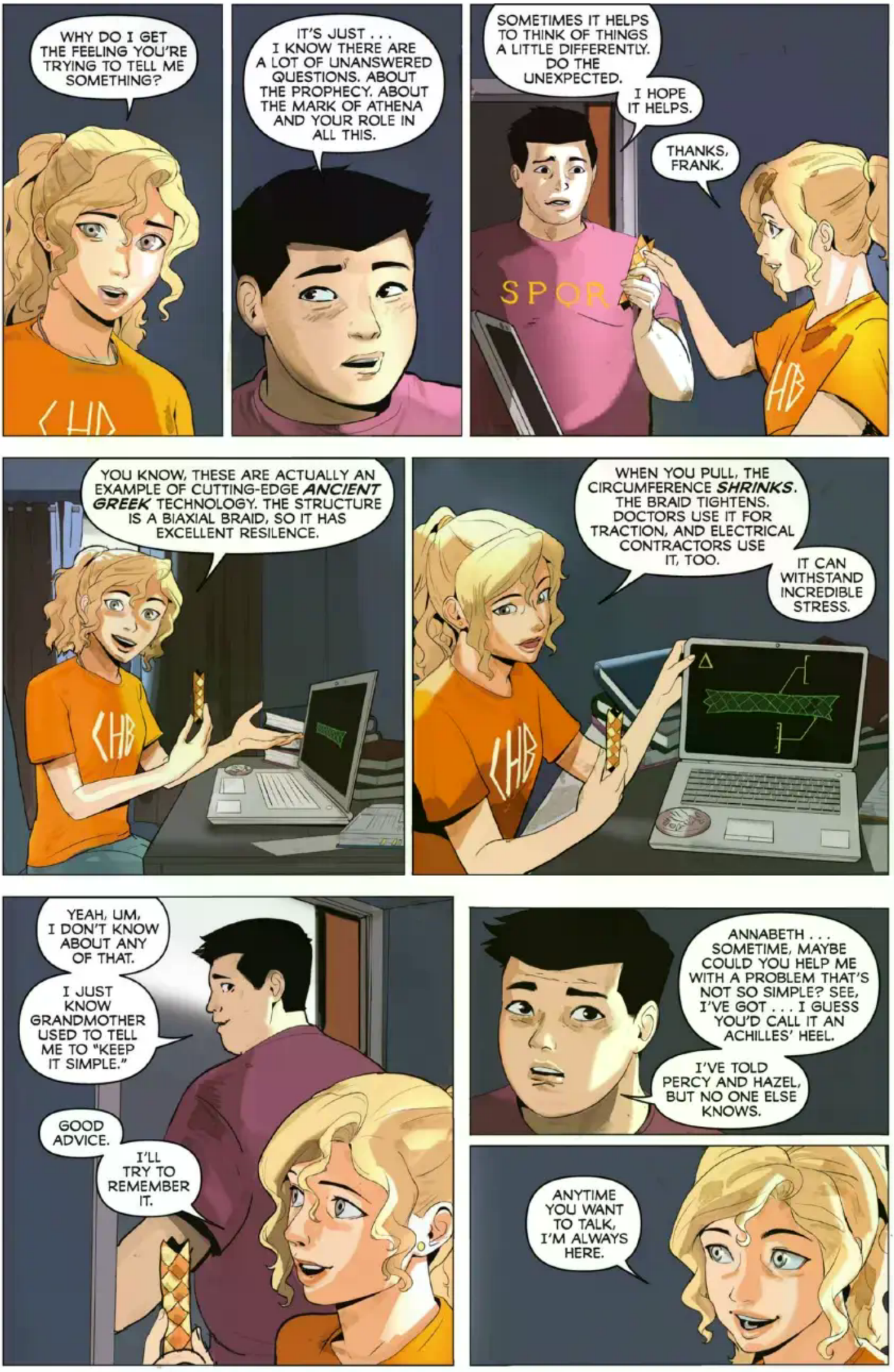

MANY WEEKS AGO.
I MUST RETURN HOME.
THE WAY IS COMPLEX. TOO COMPLEX . . .
MOM?
IS THAT YOU?
ATHENA!

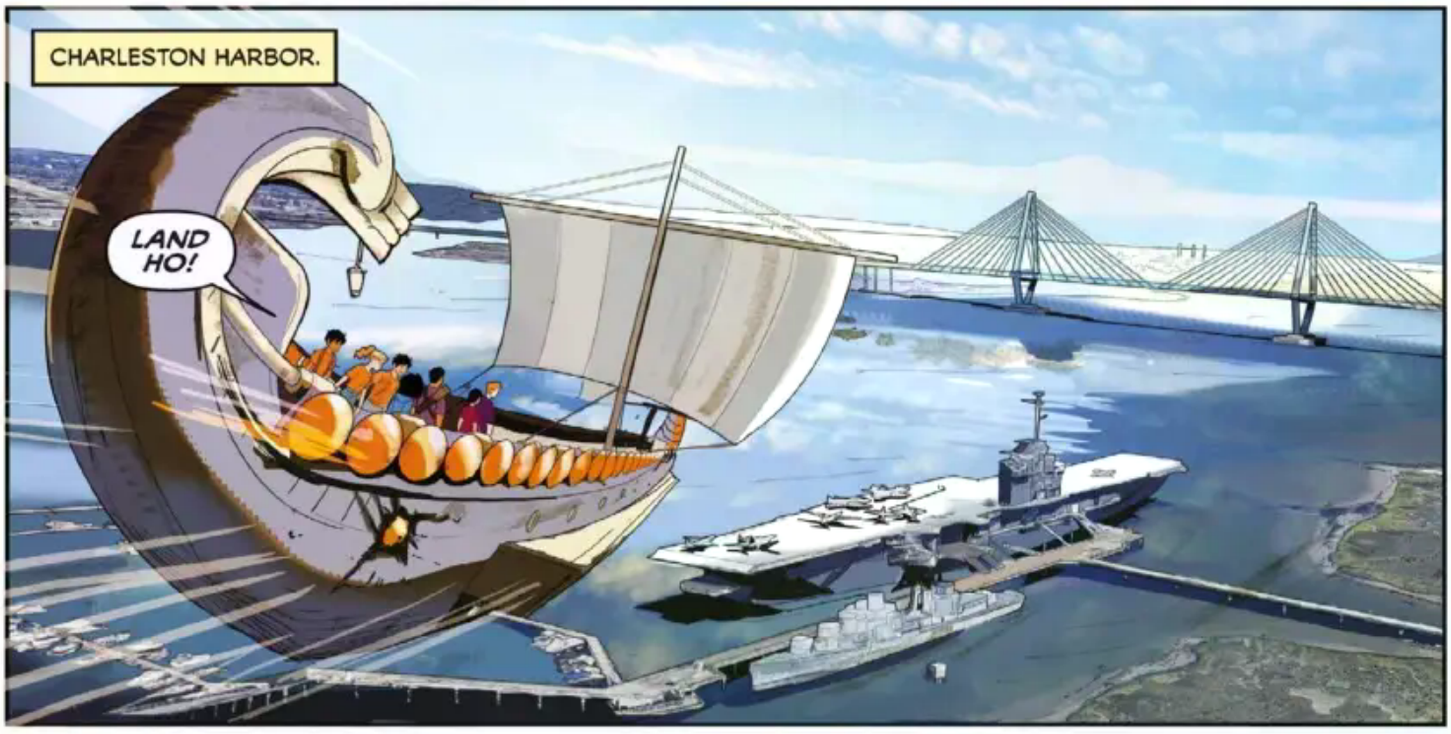
ATHENA.
THAT WAS MY NAME ONCE. BEFORE THEY SACKED MY CITY, TOOK MY IDENTITY, MADE ME INTO THIS.
I MUST RETURN HOME.
YOU'RE . . . YOU MEAN YOU'RE NOT ATHENA? YOU'RE YOUR OTHER VERSION?
YOU'RE . . . MINERVA?

DON'T CALL ME THAT!
I CARRIED A SPEAR AND SHIELD! I HELD VICTORY IN THE PALM OF MY HAND!
I WAS MORE THAN THIS!

IT'S ME, MOM. ANNABETH. YOUR DAUGHTER.
MY DAUGHTER.
. . . YES. MY CHILDREN WILL AVENGE ME. THEY MUST DESTROY THE ROMANS. HORRIBLE, DISHONORABLE, COPYCAT ROMANS.
ANYONE WHO HELPS ROME MUST PERISH. IF YOU WOULD JOIN THEM, YOU ARE NO CHILD OF MINE. YOU HAVE ALREADY FAILED ME!
ATHENA ISN'T THE GODDESS OF REVENGE. SOMETHING IS WRONG WITH YOU.
WHAT HAPPENED?
ROME HAPPENED!
I WAS REPLACED. SACKED. LOOTED LIKE A TROPHY AND CARTED AWAY FROM MY HOMELAND.
I SWORE I WOULD NEVER FORGIVE. NEITHER WOULD MY CHILDREN.
TAKE THIS, DAUGHTER.
FOLLOW THE MARK OF ATHENA. AVENGE ME.
MOM . . .


NOW.
SCANNING...
73%
ANNABETH? AM I INTERRUPTING?
IT'S FINE, FRANK.
WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?
IT'S NOTHING. IT'S JUST . . .
I WANTED TO SHOW YOU THIS.
CHINESE HANDCUFFS? THE CHILDREN'S TOY?
SPQR
THEY AREN'T ACTUALLY CHINESE. I DON'T KNOW WHY PEOPLE CALL THEM THAT. IT'S JUST A FINGER TRAP.
MY GRANDMOTHER GAVE IT TO ME WHEN I WAS LITTLE.
I REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME MY FINGERS GOT STUCK. I KEPT PULLING, BUT IT ONLY GOT TIGHTER.
SPQR
SHE HAD TO SHOW ME THE TRICK IS TO NOT PANIC. DO THE UNEXPECTED.
PUSH IN, AND THEY LOOSEN UP.


WHY DO I GET THE FEELING YOU'RE TRYING TO TELL ME SOMETHING?
IT'S JUST . . . I KNOW THERE ARE A LOT OF UNANSWERED QUESTIONS. ABOUT THE PROPHECY. ABOUT THE MARK OF ATHENA AND YOUR ROLE IN ALL THIS.
SOMETIMES IT HELPS TO THINK OF THINGS A LITTLE DIFFERENTLY. DO THE UNEXPECTED.
I HOPE IT HELPS.
THANKS, FRANK.
SPQR
YOU KNOW, THESE ARE ACTUALLY AN EXAMPLE OF CUTTING-EDGE ANCIENT GREEK TECHNOLOGY. THE STRUCTURE IS A BIAXIAL BRAID, SO IT HAS EXCELLENT RESILENCE.
WHEN YOU PULL, THE CIRCUMFERENCE SHRINKS. THE BRAID TIGHTENS. DOCTORS USE IT FOR TRACTION, AND ELECTRICAL CONTRACTORS USE IT, TOO.
IT CAN WITHSTAND INCREDIBLE STRESS.
YEAH, UM, I DON'T KNOW ABOUT ANY OF THAT.
I JUST KNOW GRANDMOTHER USED TO TELL ME TO "KEEP IT SIMPLE."
GOOD ADVICE.
I'LL TRY TO REMEMBER IT.
ANNABETH . . . SOMETIME, MAYBE COULD YOU HELP ME WITH A PROBLEM THAT'S NOT SO SIMPLE? SEE, I'VE GOT . . . I GUESS YOU'D CALL IT AN ACHILLES' HEEL.
I'VE TOLD PERCY AND HAZEL, BUT NO ONE ELSE KNOWS.
ANYTIME YOU WANT TO TALK, I'M ALWAYS HERE.

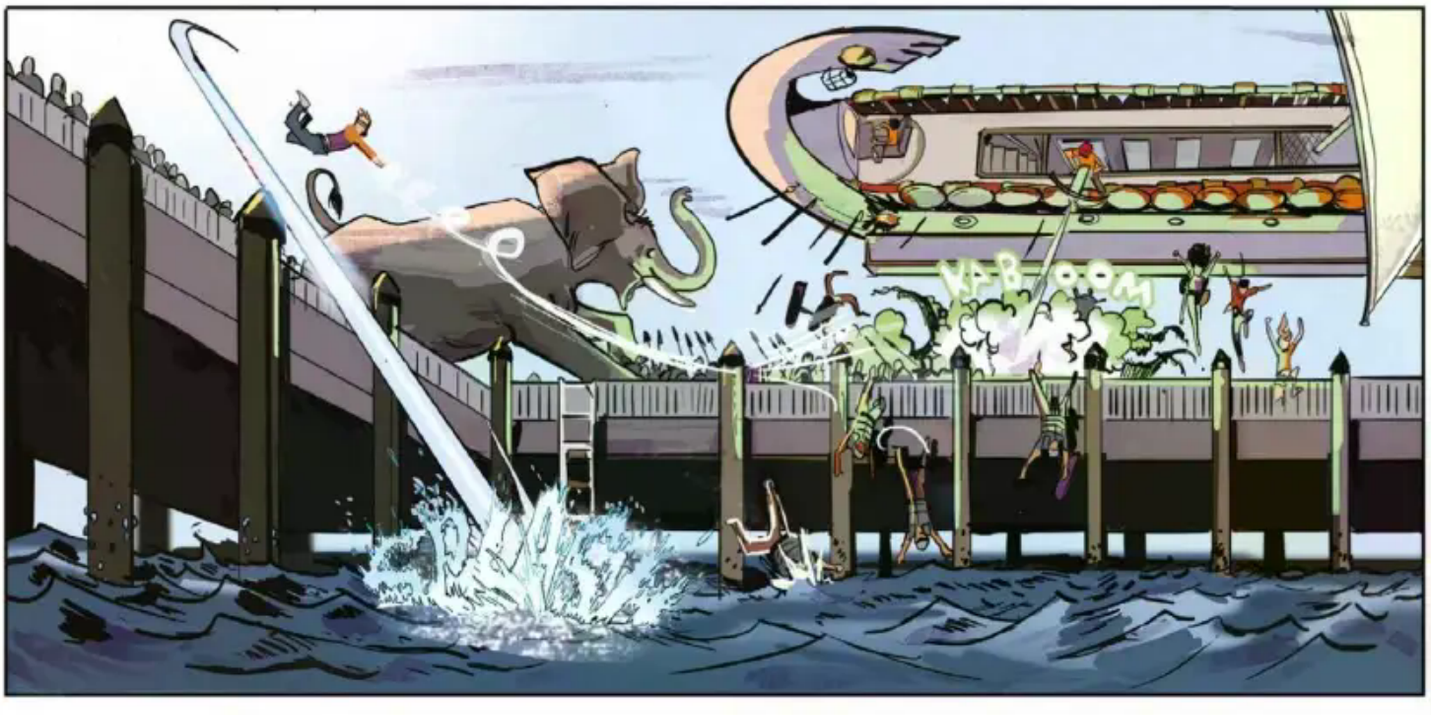

CHARLESTON HARBOR.
LAND HO!

I'VE BEEN TO CHARLESTON BEFORE. ON A QUEST. THERE ARE *TWO PLACES* HERE I THINK WE SHOULD SEARCH. ONE IS THE MUSEUM WHERE THEY KEEP THE C.S.S. *HUNLEY*, THE FIRST SUCCESSFUL MILITARY SUBMARINE.
I SALVAGED SOME IMPERIAL GOLD WEAPONS FROM IT ONCE, SO DEMIGODS HAVE *DEFINITELY* USED IT FOR HIDING STUFF. IT COULD HAVE THE MAP BACCHUS MENTIONED.
THE OTHER PLACE IS FORT SUMTER. IT'S ACROSS THE WATER NOT FAR FROM HERE.

LEO, CAN YOU STEER US TO FORT SUMTER?

YEAH, ABOUT THAT . . .

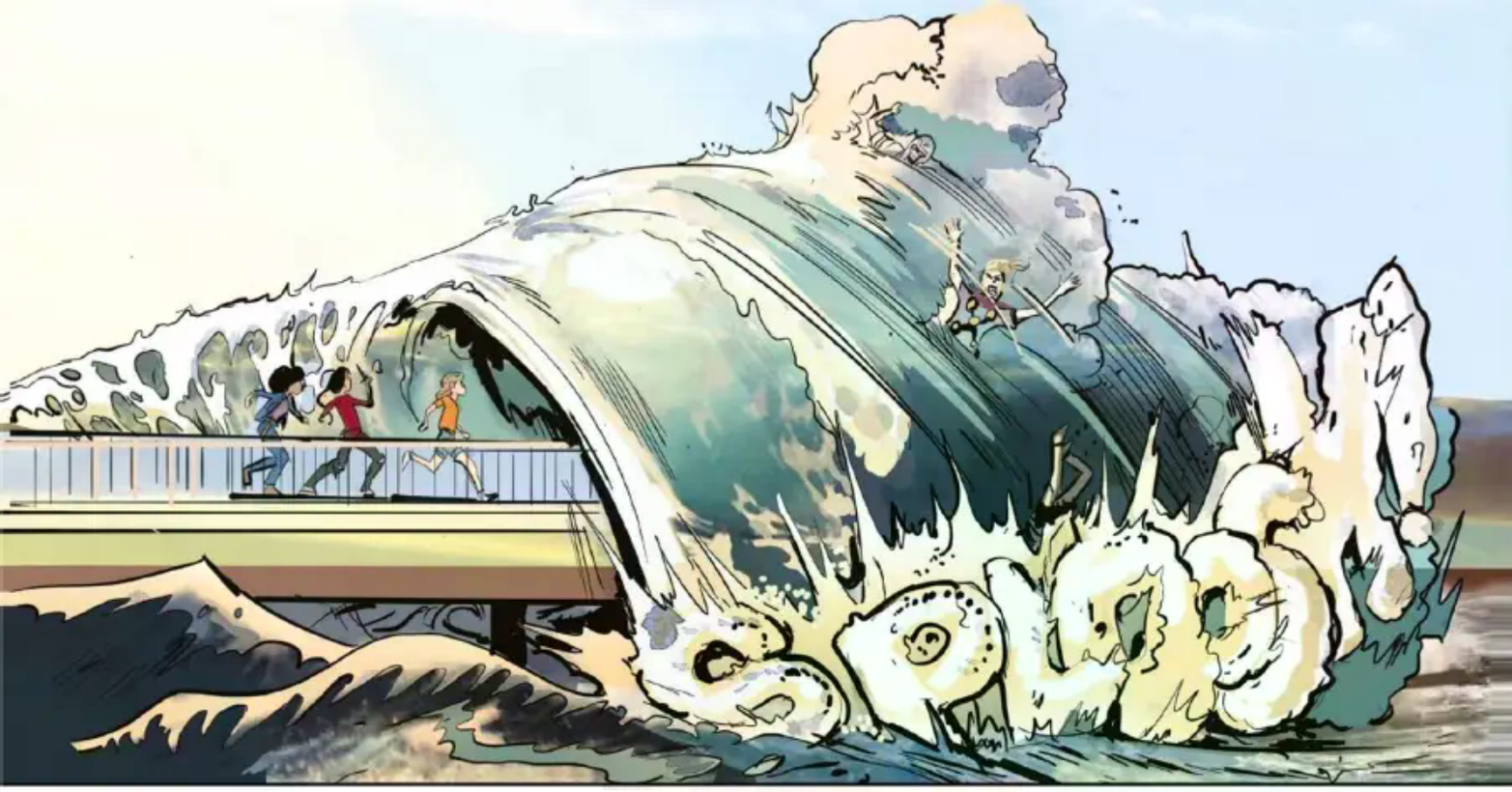
"RADAR'S SHOWING THE ROMANS ARE ALREADY THERE."
SOMEHOW, THEY'VE MANAGED TO INTERCEPT US.
WE CAN'T LET THEM STOP US. PIPER, HAZEL WE'LL LOOK FOR THE MAP. EVERYONE ELSE, HOLD THEM OFF.
SPQR


VRROOM

EAT CROSSBOW, CUPCAKES!

STOP WHERE YOU ARE!
FAT CHANCE, OCTAVIAN.
SURRENDER TO ROME!

OCTAVIAN, WHAT HAPPENED AT CAMP JUPITER WAS A SETUP.
WE CAN EXPLAIN.
CAN'T HEAR YOU! WAX-STANDARD STRATEGY WHEN BATTLING THOSE GIFTED WITH CHARMSPEAK.
NOW, THROW DOWN YOUR WEAPONS AND TURN AROUND SLOWLY SO I CAN BIND YOUR HANDS.
YOU WANT OUR WEAPONS?
HERE!
CHB
PLOOP!
WHAT WAS THAT FOR?! I DIDN'T SAY TOSS IT!
THAT COULD'VE BEEN EVIDENCE. OR-



YOU DROPPED THIS.
FORT SUMTER NATIONAL MONUMENT

I LOVE YOU!

YOU THREE DEFEND THE SHIP. WE'RE GOING TO NEED A QUICK EXTRACTION.
WHAT ABOUT YOU?
I'VE GOT TO FIND THE MAP!

ONLY ONE PROBLEM . . .
. . . I HAVE NO IDEA WHERE TO LOOK.
SLAMM
SOON, MY DEAR.
YOU WILL MEET THE *WEAVER* SOON.
SPIDERS.
WHY DID IT HAVE TO BE *SPIDERS*?

LONG AGO, YOUR MOTHER TAUGHT THE MORTAL WEAVER ARACHNE A HARD LESSON—CURSING HER FOR HER PRIDE BY TURNING HER INTO THE FIRST SPIDER.
EVER SINCE, SPIDERS HAVE HATED THE CHILDREN OF ATHENA. AND YOU HAVE FEARED THEM.

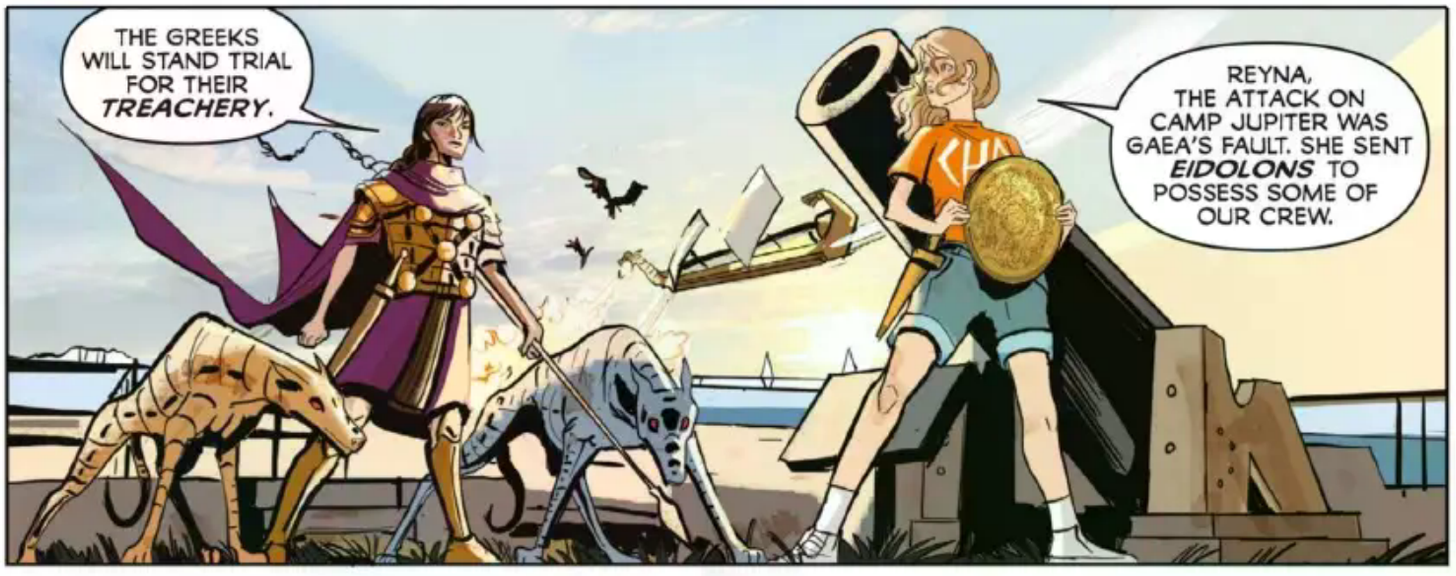
I HOPE YOU SURVIVE, CHILD. I WOULD PREFER YOU AS MY SACRIFICE.
BUT FIRST, THE WEAVER MUST TAKE HER REVENGE.
AAAGH!

FLASH

FOLLOW THE MARK, DAUGHTER.

GO.

THE MORTAR?
POP!
"SPIRITUAL BREAD CRUMBS."
RUSHING OFF?


THE GREEKS WILL STAND TRIAL FOR THEIR *TREACHERY*.
REYNA, THE ATTACK ON CAMP JUPITER WAS GAEA'S FAULT. SHE SENT *EIDOLONS* TO POSSESS SOME OF OUR CREW.

IF YOU LET GAEA DRIVE OUR CAMPS APART, THE GIANTS HAVE ALREADY WON.
THEY'LL DESTROY THE ROMANS, THE GREEKS, THE GODS . . . THE *WHOLE WORLD*.

DON'T YOU THINK I KNOW THAT? WHAT *CHOICE* HAVE YOU LEFT ME?
OCTAVIAN SMELLS BLOOD. HE'S WHIPPED THE LEGION INTO A FRENZY, AND I CAN'T STOP IT. SURRENDER TO ME. IF THE ROMANS BELIEVE JUSTICE IS SERVED, IT MAY PREVENT A NEW *CIVIL WAR*.
IF OCTAVIAN CAN'T HAVE VENGEANCE ON YOU, HE'LL TURN HIS ATTENTION TO *CAMP HALF-BLOOD*. THE LEGION WILL MARCH.

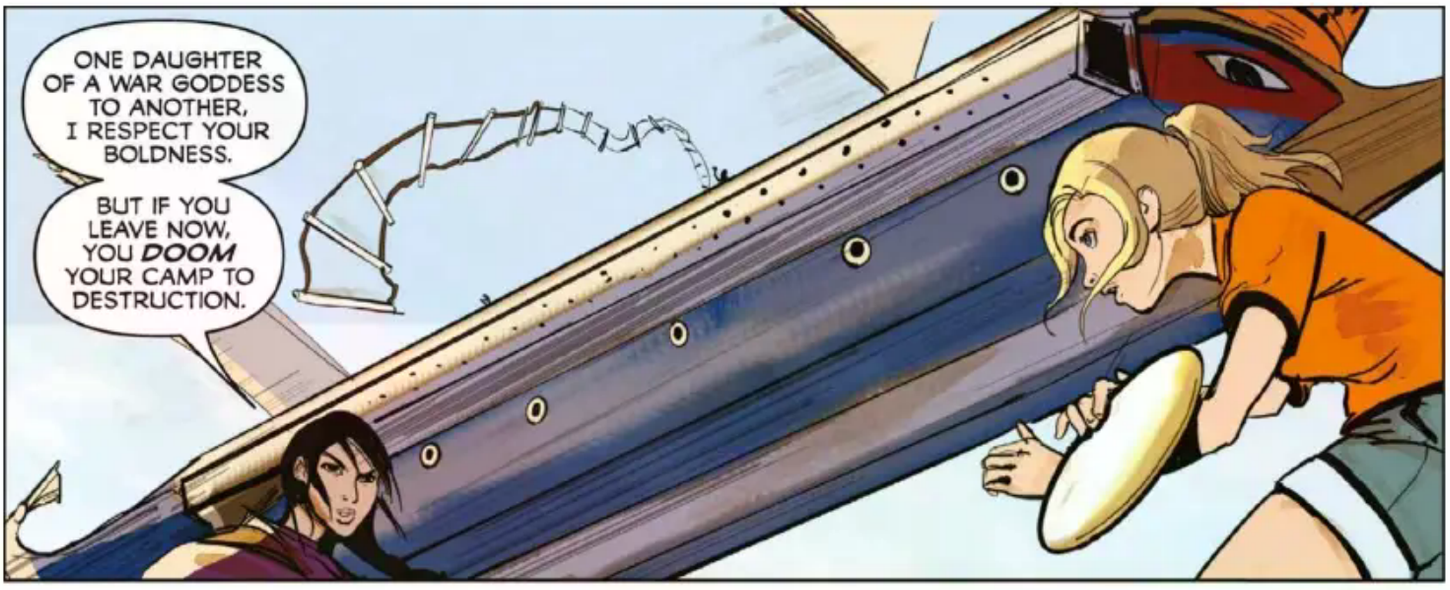
I'M GOING TO FOLLOW THE MARK OF ATHENA TO ROME. I CAN *FIX* THE GRUDGE BETWEEN OUR CAMPS.
YOU CAN TRY TO STOP ME *HERE*, IN WHICH CASE WE'LL FIGHT TO THE DEATH.

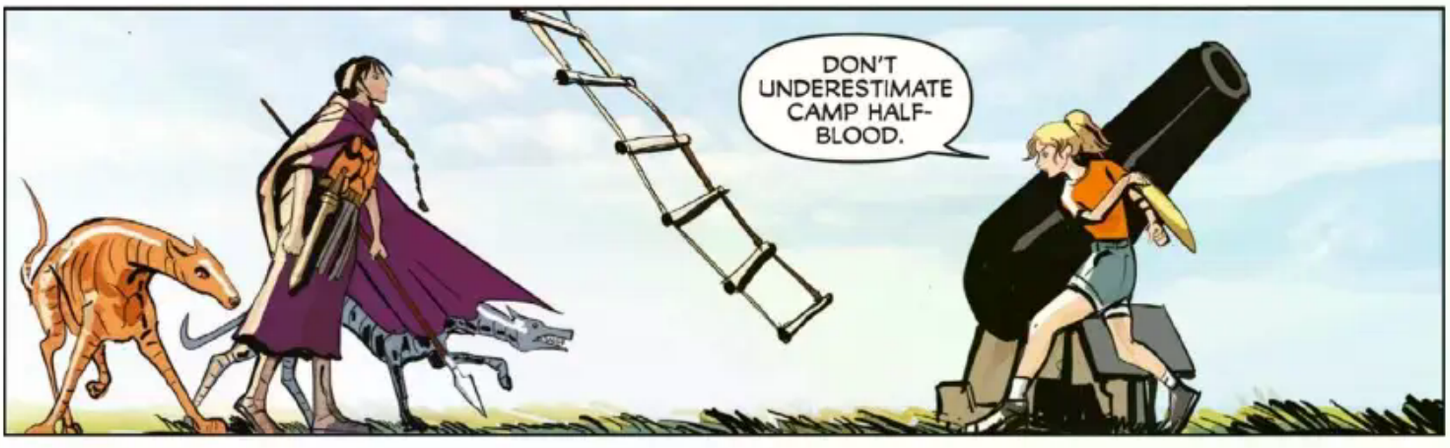
OR YOU CAN LET ME GO, AND I'LL TRY TO SAVE *BOTH* OUR CAMPS.
IF OCTAVIAN MUST MARCH ON CAMP HALF-BLOOD, AT LEAST TRY TO DELAY. SLOW HIM DOWN.

THERE'S TOO MANY!
FOR ROME!

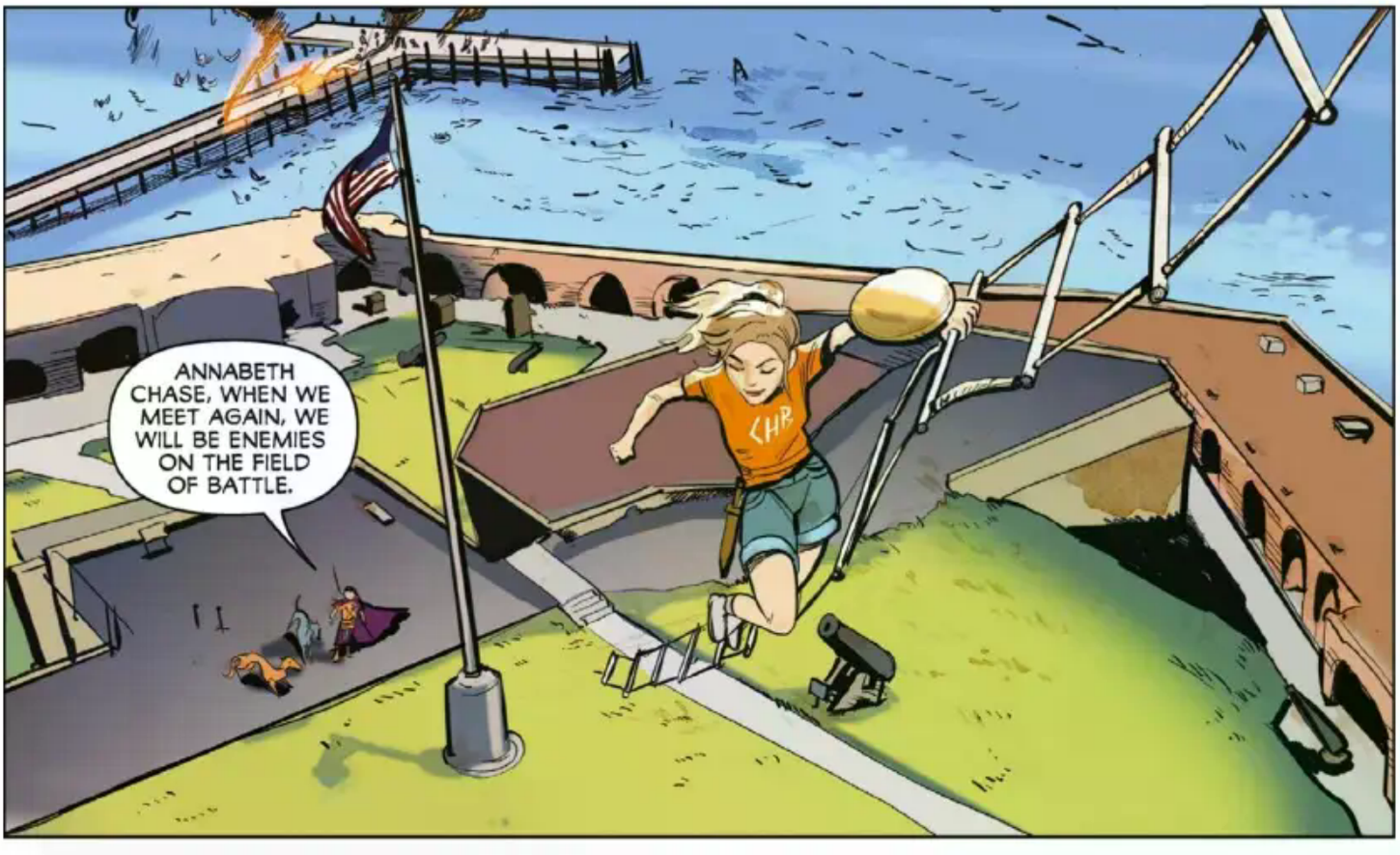
WE WON'T BE ABLE TO HOLD THEM OFF!

CAN'T YOU SEE? THE SPEAR IS THROWN.
OUR PEOPLE ARE AT WAR.
NOT IF I SUCCEED.
CHB


ONE DAUGHTER OF A WAR GODDESS TO ANOTHER, I RESPECT YOUR BOLDNESS.
BUT IF YOU LEAVE NOW, YOU DOOM YOUR CAMP TO DESTRUCTION.

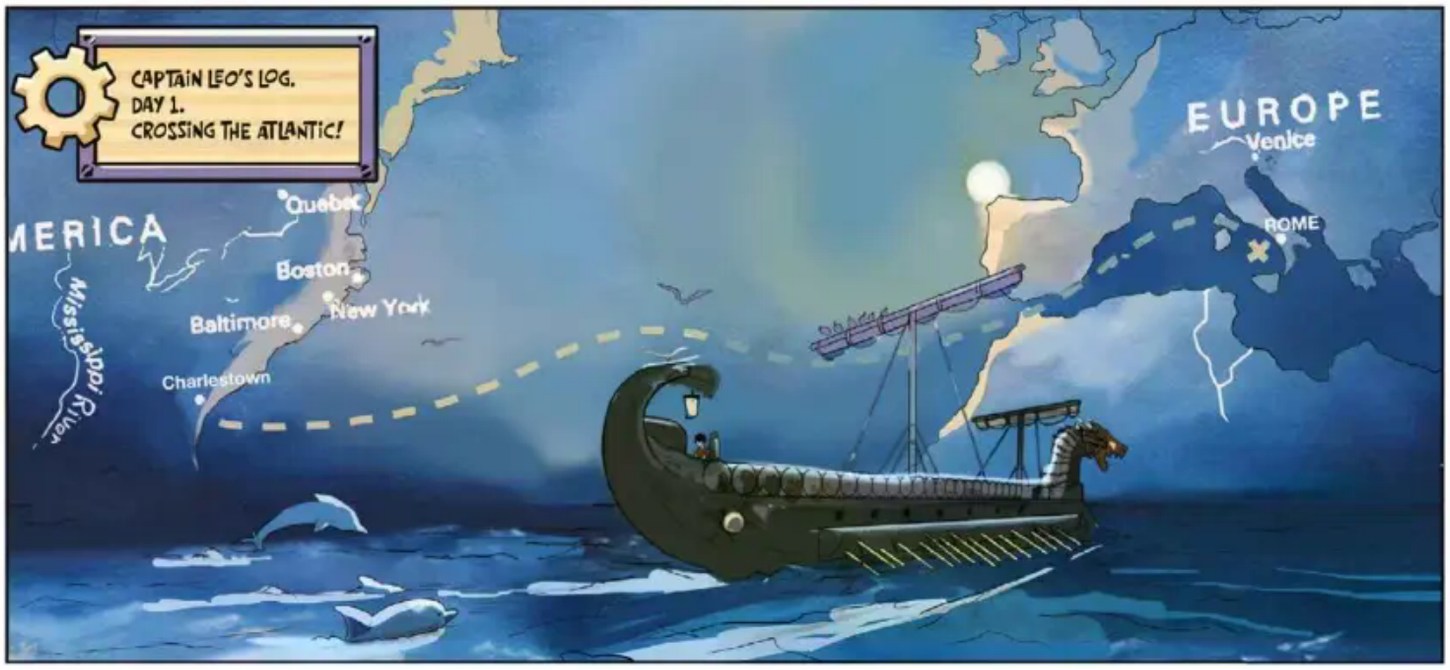

DON'T UNDERESTIMATE CAMP HALF-BLOOD.

YOU'VE NEVER SEEN THE LEGION AT WAR.


ANNABETH CHASE, WHEN WE MEET AGAIN, WE WILL BE ENEMIES ON THE FIELD OF BATTLE.

I FOUND THE MAP!
WE'RE NOT OUT OF THE WOODS YET–
STABILIZER CRITICAL
FLIGHT STABILIZERS DAMAGED– WE'RE GOING DOWN!
WE'VE GOT COMPANY!
I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE EAGLES.
I'LL CATCH US A WAVE.
SPQR
KHB

ZAKOOM!
THAT MISSION WENT *PERFECTLY*!
COACH, WE GOT *ATTACKED* BY AN ADVANCE GUARD OF ROMANS ON GIANT EAGLES.
WE ALMOST DESTROYED A *NATIONAL MONUMENT*.
EXACTLY, MCLEAN. EVERY GOOD MISSION NEEDS A GOOD *SCRAP*.
ANYBODY HUNGRY?


CAPTAIN LEO'S LOG.
DAY 1.
CROSSING THE ATLANTIC!
EUROPE
Venice
ROME
MERICA
Quebec
Boston
New York
Baltimore
Charlestown
Mississippi River

WHILE THE CREW TOOK A WELL-EARNED BREAK...
AND ANNABETH ANALYZED THE MAP...

YOURS TRULY TOOK A TRIP!
LEO, LOOK... WHAT HAPPENED AT THE GREAT SALT LAKE...
I'D BE WILLING. I COULD USE THE FORTUNE COOKIE TO FIND YOUR BROTHER.
WHAT? NO! I'D NEVER ASK YOU TO DO THAT.
NOT AFTER WHAT NEMESIS SAID ABOUT THE HORRIBLE COST.

NO, I WAS JUST THINKING ABOUT THE WAY YOU TRICKED NARCISSUS AND THOSE NYMPHS.
YOU WERE AMAZING. YOU REMINDED ME SO MUCH OF-
SAMMY?
WHO IS HE, ANYWAY?

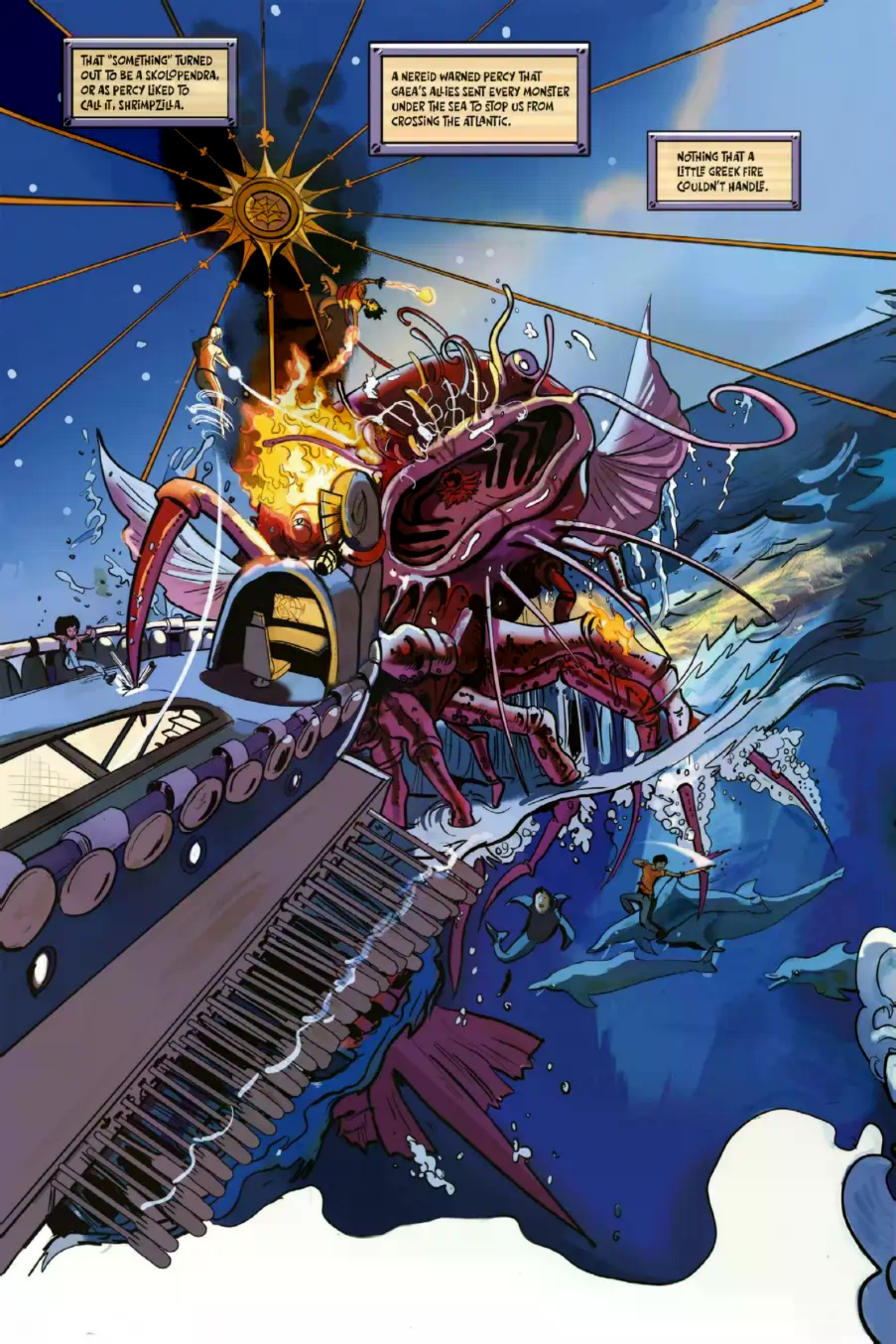
THAT'S JUST IT . . . I MIGHT BE ABLE TO SHOW YOU.
THERE'S A SORT OF *FLASHBACK* THAT HAPPENS TO ME. I HAVEN'T HAD ONE IN A LONG TIME, AND I'VE NEVER TRIED TO MAKE ONE HAPPEN ON PURPOSE.
BUT I SHARED ONE WITH FRANK ONCE. I WOULDN'T ASK YOU TO DO THIS, BUT I'M SURE IT'S IMPORTANT. IT *CAN'T* BE A COINCIDENCE WE MET.

IF THIS WORKS, MAYBE WE CAN FINALLY UNDERSTAND HOW WE'RE CONNECTED.
BUT YOU HAVE TO TAKE MY HAND.

YO!
ARE WE *GHOSTS*?!
THIS IS A MEMORY. DON'T WORRY, NO ONE WILL SEE US.
LOOK, OVER THERE.

WITCH GIRL! MAKE ME A DIAMOND.
MY DAD SAYS YOUR CRAZY WITCH MOM CAN MAKE THOSE OUT OF THIN AIR.
I DON'T HAVE DIAMONDS! GO AWAY, RUFUS!
YOU HEARD HER.
LEAVE HER ALONE.
IS THAT . . . ?
HE LOOKS JUST LIKE–
THAT'S SAMMY.
THIS ISN'T YOUR PROBLEM, VALDEZ.
YOU'RE THE ONE WITH THE PROBLEM.
IT'S ABOUT TO GET BIGGER.
YOU TWO DESERVE EACH OTHER.
THANKS, SAMMY.
WHAT ARE BOYFRIENDS FOR?
SAMMY, NO! IT'S DANGEROUS!
AH, COME ON. NOT FOR ME. I PROMISE I WON'T SELL IT.
IT'LL JUST BE SOMETHING TO REMEMBER YOU BY.

WHERE ARE WE NOW?
I . . . I DON'T KNOW. I THINK . . .
. . . I THINK THIS IS YOUR FLASHBACK.
AH, LITTLE LEO. YOU'LL HAVE TO BE A STUNT DOUBLE FOR YOUR OLD BISABUELO SAMMY, EH?
TELL HAZEL FOR ME. I HOPED I WOULD BE ALIVE, BUT MY TIME IS ALMOST DONE.
OH, SAMMY, NO . . .
HE'S HOLDING . . . ME.
TELL HER I'M SORRY I SOLD THE DIAMOND, EH? WHEN SHE DISAPPEARED IN ALASKA . . . AH, SO LONG AGO . . . I FINALLY USED THE DIAMOND AND MOVED TO TEXAS AS I'D ALWAYS DREAMED.
STARTED MY MACHINE SHOP. STARTED MY FAMILY. IT WAS A GOOD LIFE, BUT HAZEL WAS RIGHT.
THE DIAMOND CAME WITH A CURSE. I NEVER SAW HER AGAIN.
IT WASN'T A CURSE! I WANTED TO COME BACK!
I DIED!
I GIVE YOU MY BLESSING, LEO. MY FIRST GREAT-GRANDCHILD. I HAVE A FEELING YOU ARE SPECIAL, LIKE HAZEL WAS.
YOU ARE MORE THAN A REGULAR BABY. YOU WILL CARRY ON FOR ME.
YOU WILL SEE HER SOMEDAY.
TELL HER HELLO FOR ME.
BDOOOM
NO!
SOMETHING'S HAPPENING!


THAT "SOMETHING" TURNED OUT TO BE A SKOLOPENDRA, OR AS PERCY LIKED TO CALL IT, SHRIMPZILLA.
A NEREID WARNED PERCY THAT GAEA'S ALLIES SENT EVERY MONSTER UNDER THE SEA TO STOP US FROM CROSSING THE ATLANTIC.
NOTHING THAT A LITTLE GREEK FIRE COULDN'T HANDLE.

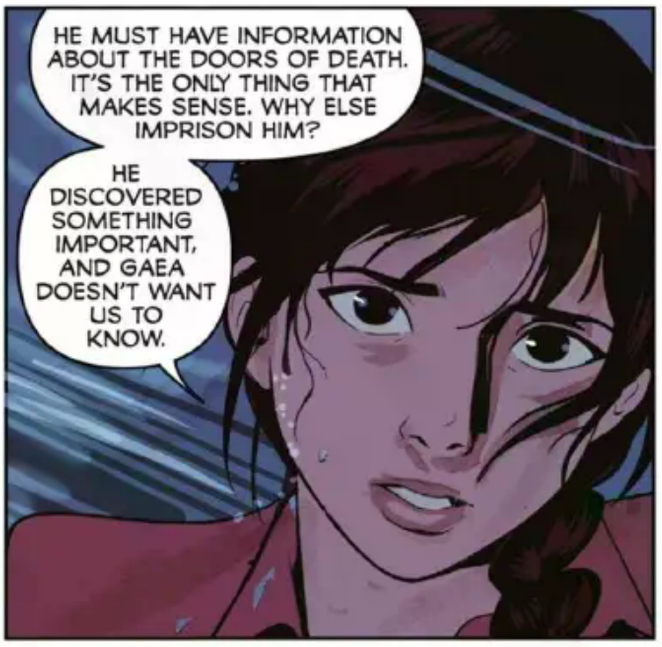
DAY 2
MARE NOSTRVM
Gibraltar
Roma
ANNABETH HELPED ME GET THE FLIGHT STABILIZER BACK UP AND RUNNING.
STABILIZER RESET Y/N_
PIPER AND JASON VOLUNTEERED TO HAVE AN AUDIENCE WITH THE GUARDIAN OF GIBRALTAR. WE DIDN'T HAVE ANY PROBLEMS WITH ACHELOUS...
NOT UNTIL HE TRIED TO DROWN JASON, ANYHOW.

HERCULES HAD SOME BAD BLOOD WITH HERA, SO HE REFUSED PASSAGE WITHOUT A CHALLENGE.
ACHELOUS'S HORN SOLVED THAT DISAGREEMENT.

DAY 3
DAY 4
ON THE WAY TO THE MEDITERRANEAN, WE GOT ATTACKED BY PIRATES.
BIG MISTAKE—
FOR THEM.

CAPTAIN LEO'S LOG, DAY 5
WELL, THIS HAS BEEN A WEEK.

WE'VE LOST ANOTHER DAY.
NICO HAS LESS THAN TWO DAYS LEFT.


HE MUST HAVE INFORMATION ABOUT THE DOORS OF DEATH. IT'S THE ONLY THING THAT MAKES SENSE. WHY ELSE IMPRISON HIM?
HE DISCOVERED SOMETHING IMPORTANT, AND GAEA DOESN'T WANT US TO KNOW.

WE SHOULD REACH THE MEDITERRANEAN TOMORROW MORNING. THEN IT'LL TAKE THE REST OF THE DAY TO REACH ROME.
THAT'S NICO'S *LAST DAY*. TWENTY-FOUR HOURS TO FIND HIM— AT MOST.

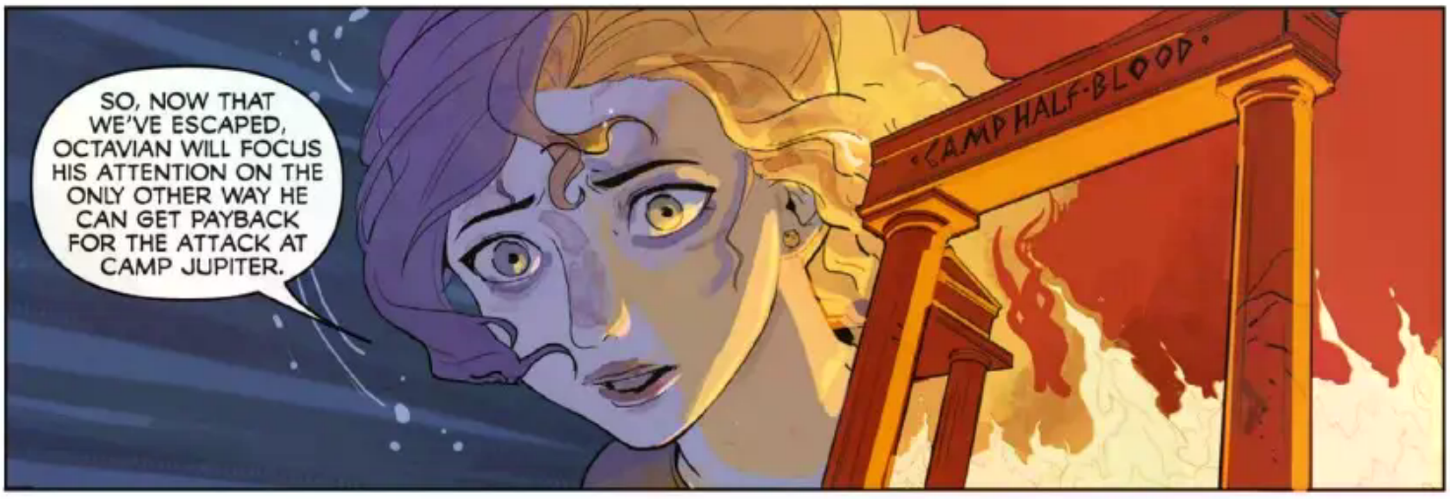
AND THAT'S ONLY PART OF THE PROBLEM. THERE'S THE MARK OF ATHENA, TOO.

THIS IS THE MAP I FOUND AT FORT SUMTER.
IT'S BLANK?
IT'S LIKE THE MARK OF ATHENA. I CAN ONLY SEE IT WHEN I'M *ALONE*. IT WON'T SHOW ITSELF TO OTHER DEMIGODS.

THE MAP WAS HARD TO DECIPHER, BUT IT SHOWED A SPOT ON THE TIBER RIVER IN ROME.
THAT'S WHERE *MY* QUEST STARTS . . . THE PATH I'VE GOT TO TAKE TO FOLLOW THE MARK.

WHAT IS THE MARK?
A FIERY RED OWL, LIKE THE ONE ON THIS SILVER DRACHMA MY MOTHER GAVE ME THE LAST TIME I SAW HER.
THE INSCRIPTION IS "ALPHA, THETA, EPSILON." IT MEANS "OF THE ATHENIANS." IT'S A MOTTO, LIKE THE ROMAN SPQR. IT MEANS ONLY I CAN FOLLOW IT. WHEN WE GET TO ROME, I'LL HAVE TO STRIKE OUT ON MY OWN.
"WISDOM'S DAUGHTER WALKS ALONE . . ."
WHAT DOES THE MARK LEAD TO?
IT'S A STATUE, ISN'T IT.
NOT JUST ANY STATUE. THE STATUE. THE ATHENA PARTHENOS. THE MOST FAMOUS GREEK STATUE OF ALL TIME.
IT WAS FORTY FEET TALL, COVERED IN IVORY AND GOLD.
IT STOOD IN THE MIDDLE OF THE PARTHENON IN ATHENS.
I KNOW THE LEGEND. IN ANCIENT TIMES, TO BREAK THE GREEKS' SPIRIT, THE ROMANS CARTED OFF THE ATHENA PARTHENOS WHEN THEY TOOK OVER ATHENS.
THEY LITERALLY STOLE ATHENA SO SHE COULD NO LONGER BE THE SYMBOL OF GREEK MILITARY POWER.
SHE BECAME MINERVA, A MUCH TAMER GODDESS.
IF I CAN FIND THE STATUE AND SAVE IT SOMEHOW, IT COULD UNITE THE TWO CAMPS. HEAL MY MOTHER OF THE HATRED TEARING HER TWO ASPECTS APART.
AND MAYBE . . . MAYBE THE STATUE HAS SOME SORT OF POWER THAT COULD HELP US AGAINST THE GIANTS.
"THE GIANTS' BANE STANDS GOLD AND PALE, WON WITH PAIN FROM A WOVEN JAIL."
IT COULD CHANGE EVERYTHING.

WE NEED IT NOW MORE THAN EVER.
I SHOULD'VE TOLD YOU THIS EARLIER, BUT JASON WAS RIGHT– THE ROMANS WON'T FOLLOW US ACROSS THE ATLANTIC.


SO, NOW THAT WE'VE ESCAPED, OCTAVIAN WILL FOCUS HIS ATTENTION ON THE ONLY OTHER WAY HE CAN GET PAYBACK FOR THE ATTACK AT CAMP JUPITER.
CAMP HALF-BLOOD

THEN WE CAN'T FAIL.
FOR THE GREEKS. FOR THE ROMANS. HECK, FOR EVERYTHING.
SPQR, ALPHA THETA EPILSON, AND ALL THAT JAZZ.

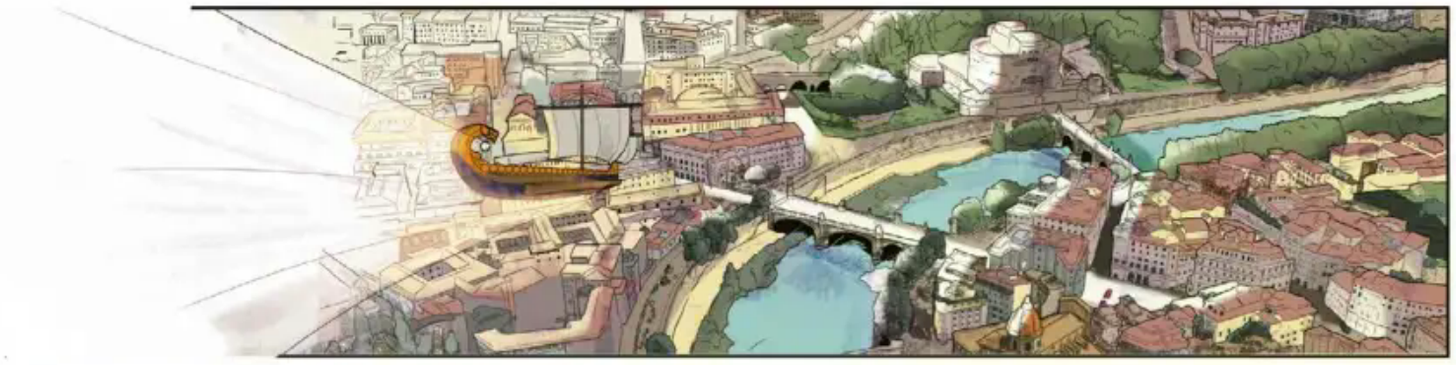
LET'S GET SOME REST. WE'RE GOING TO NEED IT.
AS ONE.

"SEVEN HALF-BLOODS SHALL ANSWER THE CALL."

AH, THE SWEETNESS OF MY REVENGE.
WE HAVE WORKED WELL OVER THE CENTURIES, HAVE WE NOT?
THEIR SHIP SHOULD ARRIVE IN ROME SHORTLY AFTER DAYBREAK.
I WOULD REMIND YOU, YOUR LADYSHIP, THAT GAEA WISHES THE GIRL TO BE TAKEN ALIVE.
TORMENT HER. DRIVE HER INSANE. PUT ON A SHOW.
BUT HER BLOOD MUST BE SPILT ON THE ANCIENT STONES.
OTHER DEMIGODS COULD BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE.
IT DOES NOT HAVE TO BE ONE OF HERS.
YES, BUT GAEA PREFERS THIS GIRL. AND THE BOY– THE SON OF POSEIDON.
YOU CAN SEE WHY THOSE TWO WOULD BE MOST SUITED TO THE TASK.
TEND TO YOUR OWN PREPARATIONS. HAVE YOUR SPECTACLE.

"I WILL WORK IN DARKNESS."
DREAMING AGAIN, PERCY JACKSON?
ALLOW ME TO SHOW YOU TRUE DARKNESS.
SEE WHAT WILL BECOME OF YOUR BELOVED CAMP HALF-BLOOD.
YOU SHOULD HAVE RETURNED THERE. AT LEAST THEN YOU COULD HAVE DIED WITH YOUR COMRADES WHEN THE ROMANS INVADE.
NOW YOUR BLOOD WILL BE SPILLED FAR FROM HOME, ON THE ANCIENT STONES, AND I WILL RISE.
CAMP HALF BLOOD
CHB
COME TO ME WILLINGLY. BRING THE GIRL. PERHAPS I WILL SPARE THE PLACE YOU LOVE.
OTHERWISE . . .
". . . ENJOY TARTARUS, MY LITTLE PAWN."
CHB
RISE AND SHINE, LANDLUBBERS!

WE MADE IT TO *ROME*!
I'LL BE HONEST. I DIDN'T THINK WE HAD A CHANCE IN HADES OF GETTING HERE.
THE MAP SHOWS A SPOT ON THE *TIBER RIVER*. LEO, CAN YOU GET US DOWN THERE?



WHERE TO NOW?

WE'LL SPLIT UP. PERCY AND I WILL FOLLOW THE MARK OF ATHENA.

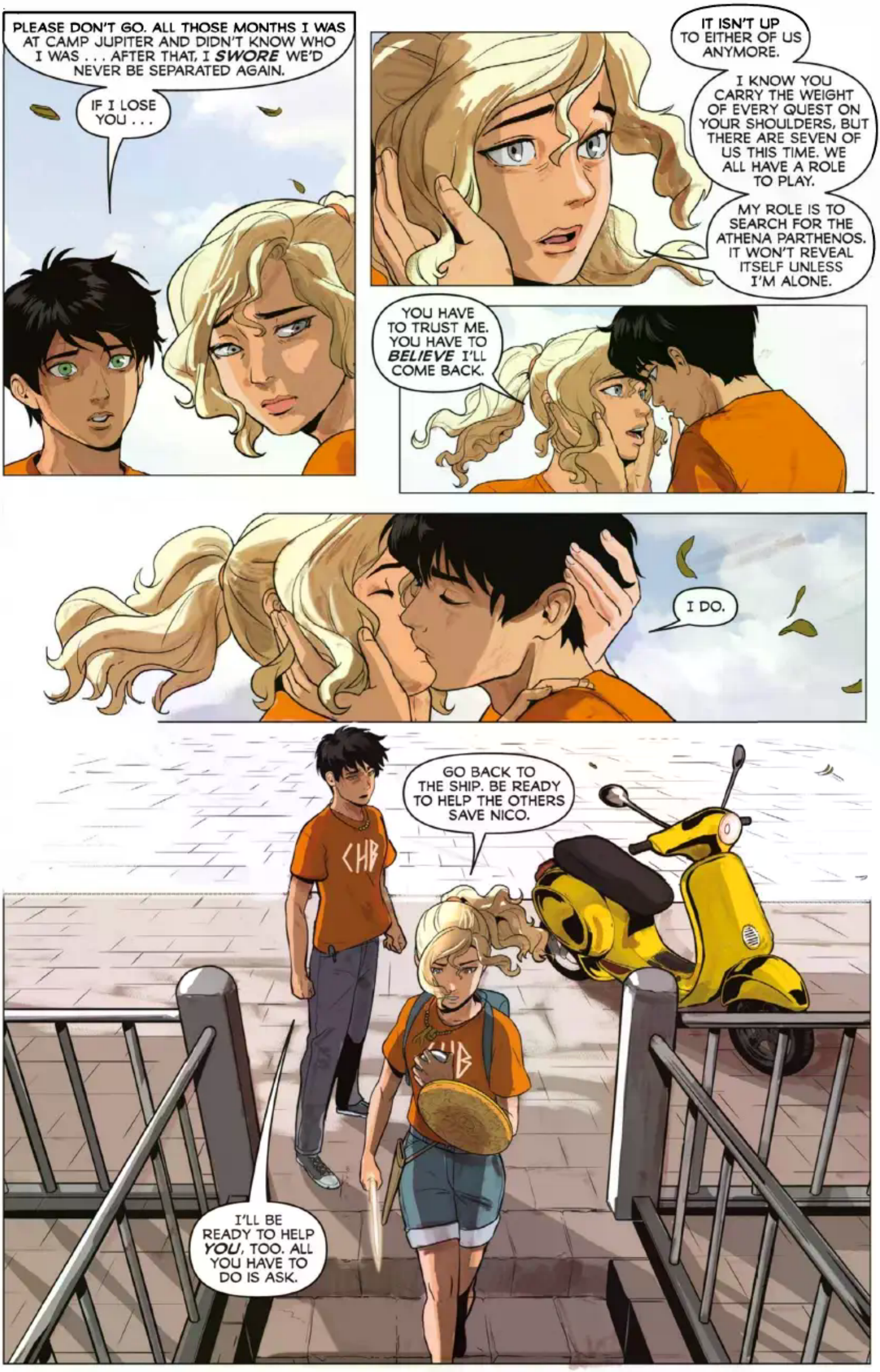
NICO ONLY HAS UNTIL SUNSET TONIGHT. I HAVE TO PINPOINT HIS LOCATION.
I'LL HELP YOU, HAZEL!

JASON AND I CAN STAY BEHIND TO GUARD THE SHIP AND PROVIDE BACKUP, IF ANYONE NEEDS IT.

GOOD LUCK, EVERYONE.

I CAN SENSE THE STYGIAN IRON OF NICO'S SWORD NEARBY.

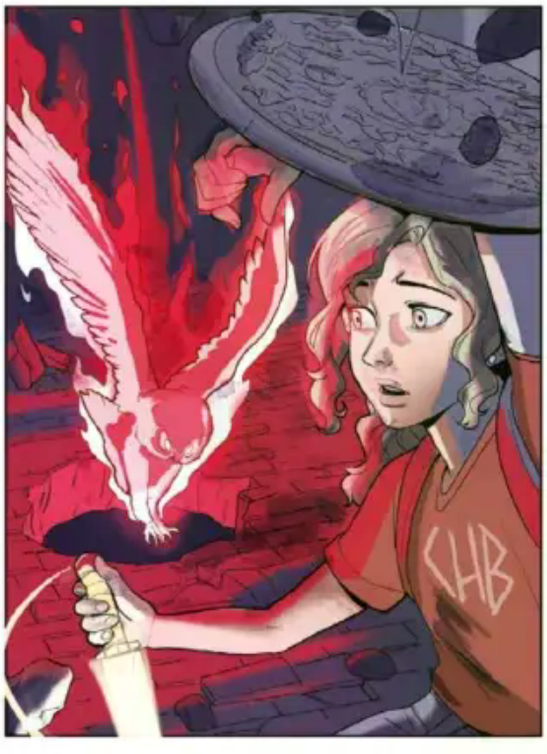
SOMEWHERE IN ROME.
YOU KNOW WHERE WE'RE GOING, ANNABETH?
YES. I'M FOLLOWING THE MARK OF ATHENA.
SCREEECH
I SUPPOSE THIS IS IT.
ANNABETH . . .


PLEASE DON'T GO. ALL THOSE MONTHS I WAS AT CAMP JUPITER AND DIDN'T KNOW WHO I WAS . . . AFTER THAT, I SWORE WE'D NEVER BE SEPARATED AGAIN.
IF I LOSE YOU . . .
IT ISN'T UP TO EITHER OF US ANYMORE.
I KNOW YOU CARRY THE WEIGHT OF EVERY QUEST ON YOUR SHOULDERS, BUT THERE ARE SEVEN OF US THIS TIME. WE ALL HAVE A ROLE TO PLAY.
MY ROLE IS TO SEARCH FOR THE ATHENA PARTHENOS. IT WON'T REVEAL ITSELF UNLESS I'M ALONE.
YOU HAVE TO TRUST ME. YOU HAVE TO BELIEVE I'LL COME BACK.
I DO.
GO BACK TO THE SHIP. BE READY TO HELP THE OTHERS SAVE NICO.
I'LL BE READY TO HELP YOU, TOO. ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS ASK.

SOME OF MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS, I PRESUME . . .
KRAAK!!

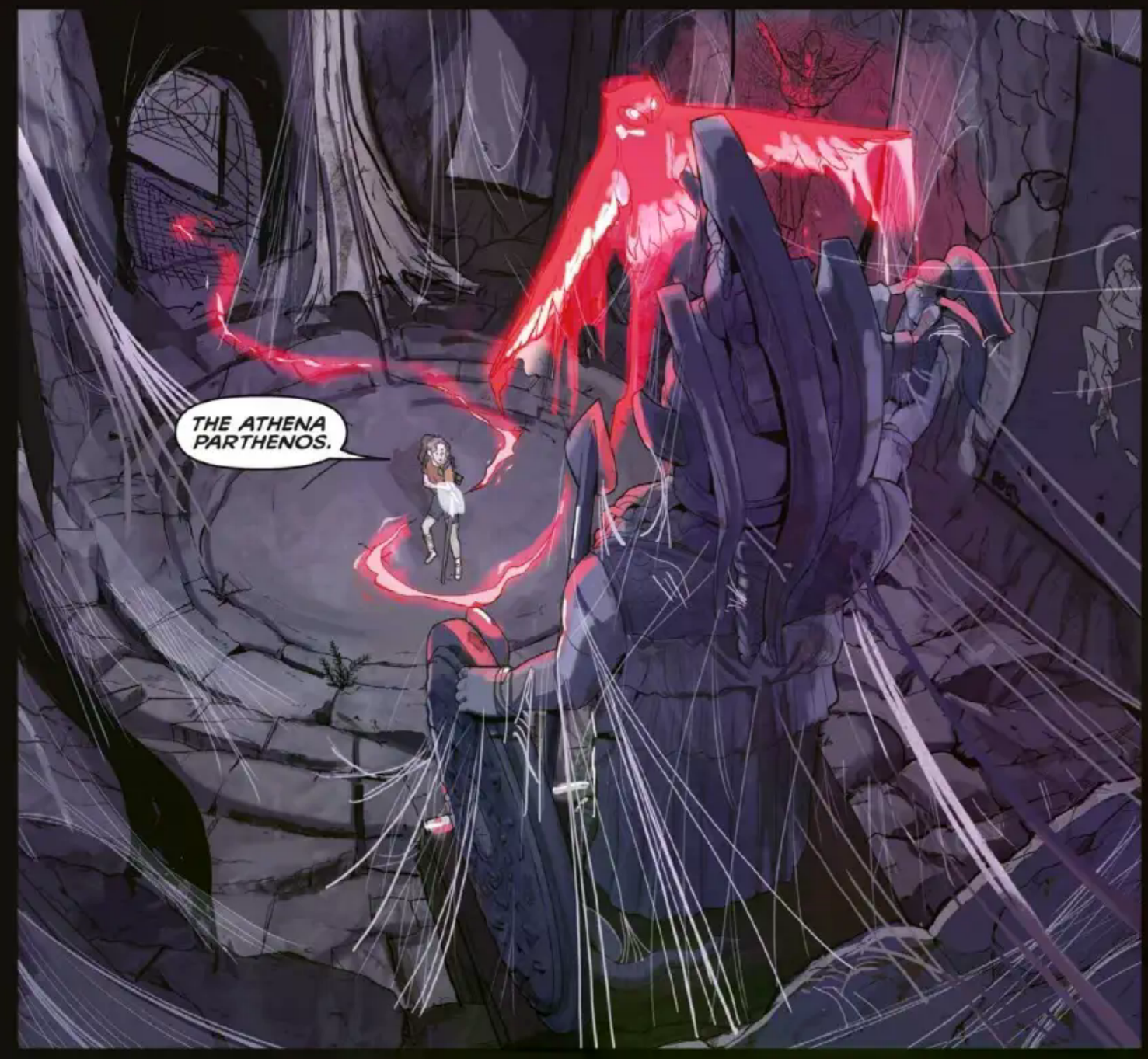
THIS CAVERN . . .
IT'S AN ALTAR ROOM FOR THE ROMAN GOD *MITHRAS*. GOD OF ROMAN WARRIORS.
ONE OF THE GODS THEY *REPLACED* MY MOTHER WITH.

RRRMMMBBLLL


CHB

SNAPP
AAIIGH!
-:NNG!:-
-:GROAN:-

HNNAAIIIGH!


THE ATHENA PARTHENOS.

IT'S REALLY HERE.

FOR AGES, I HAVE KNOWN THAT YOU WOULD COME.
I HAVE SEEN YOU IN MY DREAMS.

NOW I WILL FEAST ON YOU, MY SWEET.
BUT DO NOT FEAR. I WILL MAKE A BEAUTIFUL TAPESTRY DEPICTING YOUR DEATH.

THE PANTHEON.
I HOPE ANNABETH IS OKAY.
SHE'D LOVE THE *ARCHITECTURE* OF THIS PLACE.

THE PANTHEON WAS BUILT AS A TEMPLE TO THE GODS.
IT'S ONE OF THE BEST-PRESERVED ROMAN BUILDINGS IN THE WORLD. IT'S BEEN STANDING FOR TWO THOUSAND YEARS.
M·AGRIPPA·L·F·COS·TERTIVM·FECIT

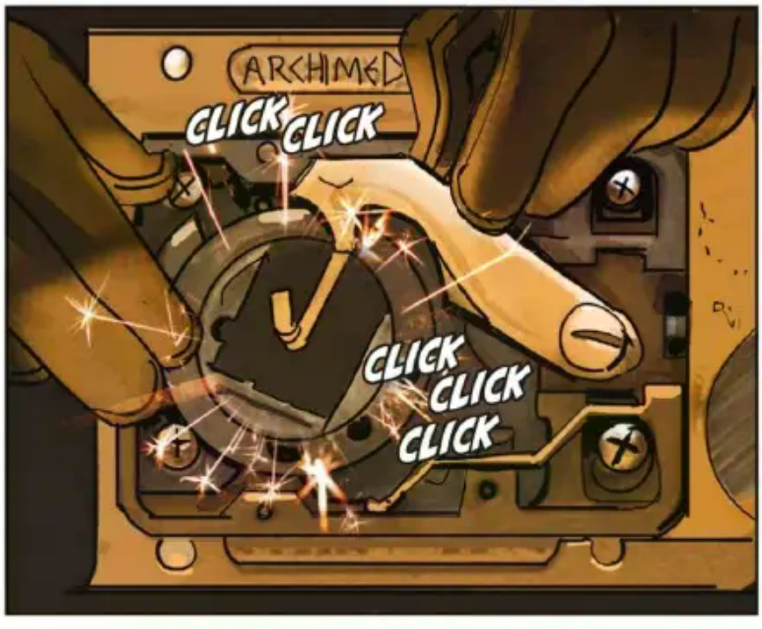
EXCUSE ME.
PARDON!

NICE, BUT WHAT'S THIS BUILDING GOT TO DO WITH NICO?

MY BROTHER CARRIES A VERY PARTICULAR SWORD– MADE OF *STYGIAN IRON*. I CAN SENSE ITS PRECIOUS METAL . . .
. . . AND AN ENTRANCE *UNDERGROUND* SOMEWHERE CLOSE BY.
OVER HERE.
ARE YOU SURE?
THE PASSAGE IS AROUND HERE. BUT THIS GUY'S FINAL RESTING PLACE IS IN THE WAY. *RAPHAEL* SOMEBODY?
FAMOUS *PAINTER*, I THINK.
SEPVLCRVM RAPHAELIS · SANCTI

THERE'S A MECHANICAL LOCK HERE. I CAN FEEL IT. SOMETIMES STUFF LIKE THAT SORT OF TALKS TO ME.
I KNOW IT'S *WEIRD*, BUT THIS ONE TIME I TOLD ALL THE ELECTRONIC BILLBOARDS IN TIMES SQUARE TO READ "ALL DA LADIES LUV LEO," SO IT HAS ITS UPSIDE.

THE LOCK FACE HAS BEEN REMOVED, BUT MAYBE I CAN COAX THE TUMBLERS INTO PLACE . . .


ARCHIMED
CLICK CLICK
CLICK CLICK CLICK

VOILÀ!
CREAK

FRANK, YOU GO FIRST.
HEY!

UNDERGROUND IS MY SPECIALTY. I'LL GO FIRST.
I'LL SCOUT THINGS OUT AND MAKE SURE THE TUNNEL IS STRUCTURALLY SOUND.
WAIT HERE.

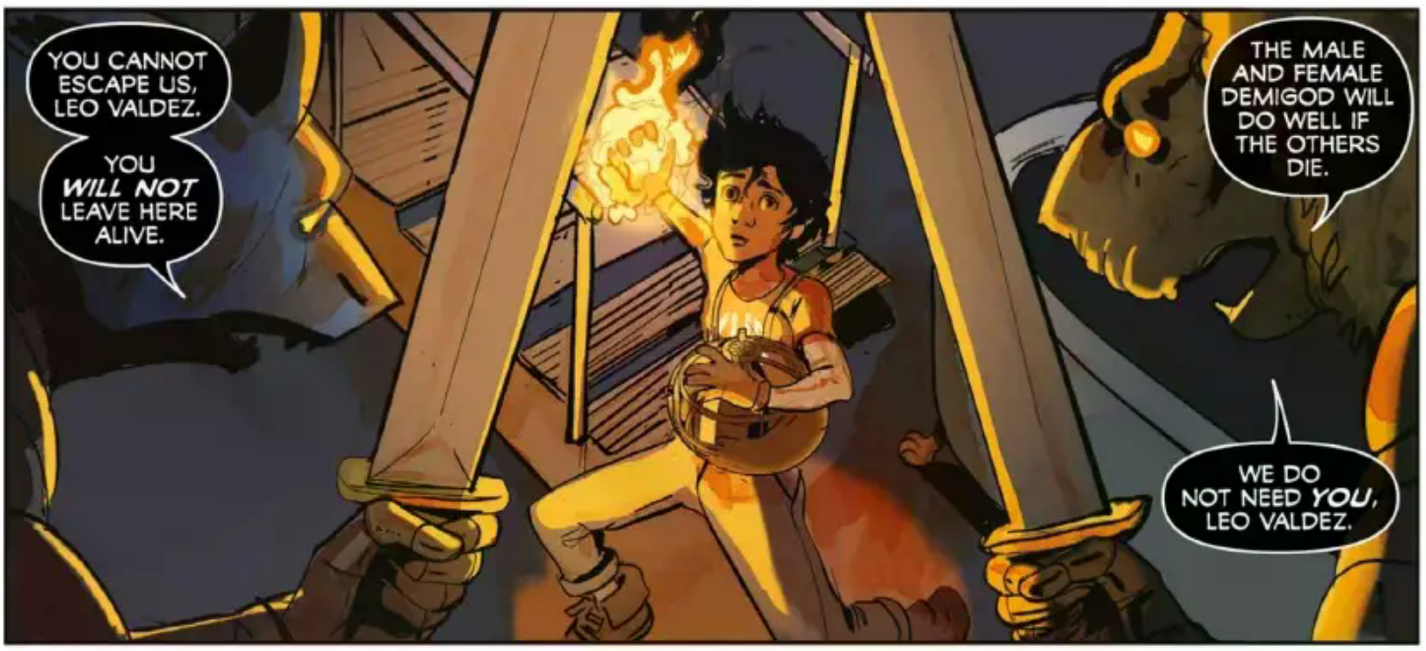
YOU DON'T LIKE ME VERY MUCH, DO YOU.
I HAVEN'T DECIDED YET.
OH, WELL, TAKE YOUR TIME.
LOOK . . . IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT.
I MEAN, YOU'RE A LITTLE ANNOYING SOMETIMES, SO I GUESS IT *IS* YOUR FAULT, BUT THERE'S MORE TO IT.
SEE, YOU'VE GOT THE FIRE THING, AND MY MOM DIED FROM A FIREBOMB IN AFGHANISTAN WHEN SHE WAS SERVING IN THE WAR.
MY MOM DIED IN A FIRE AT HER WORKSHOP. THE FIRST NIGHT GAEA APPEARED TO ME.
FOR A GREEK AND A ROMAN, SOUNDS LIKE WE AREN'T SO DIFFERENT.
THERE'S MORE. SEE, I GET MY SHAPE-CHANGING ABILITY FROM MY MOM'S SIDE. AND THERE'S THE WHOLE ***SON-OF-MARS*** THING FROM MY DAD.
THAT'S A LOT OF POWER FOR ONE PERSON, SO I HAVE A . . . WEAKNESS. MY LIFE IS TIED TO A PIECE OF FIREWOOD.
WHEN IT BURNS UP, I ***DIE***. I GAVE IT TO HAZEL FOR SAFEKEEPING.
THAT'S THE ***WEIRDEST*** THING I'VE EVER HEARD.
AND I'M A DEMIGOD. I KNOW WEIRD.
YEAH, WELL, WELCOME TO MY LIFE.

ALL RIGHT, I GET WHY YOU'D BE A LITTLE WARY OF ME. BUT WE'RE ON THE SAME TEAM. I'M NOT GOING TO HURT YOUR STICK.
BESIDES, I'M PRETTY GOOD AT FIXING DESIGN FLAWS. MAYBE THERE'S A WAY TO–
LEO VALDEZ–
–WE MEET AGAIN.
KILL THEM!
THE EIDOLONS!
FRANK . . .
. . . DOWN THE HATCH!

WHUNK
I TOLD THE LOCK TO RELOCK ITSELF. THAT SHOULD KEEP THEM OUT.
DON'T FREAK. I'M SUMMONING A LITTLE FIRE, SO WE CAN SEE WHERE WE'RE GOING.
THANKS FOR THE WARNING.
I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU TWO TO *WAIT*.
SORRY. WE RAN INTO THE *EIDOLONS*. IT SEEMS PIPER'S CHARMSPEAK DIDN'T TAKE.
SHE MADE THEM PROMISE TO STAY OFF THE SHIP AND NOT POSSESS ANY OF *US*. BUT IF THEY USE OTHER BODIES TO ATTACK US, THEN THEY'RE NOT TECHNICALLY BREAKING THEIR VOW.
GREAT. MONSTERS WHO ARE ALSO LAWYERS. I *REALLY* WANT TO KILL THEM.
FORGET THEM FOR NOW.
LOOKS LIKE A POWER SWITCH.

WHOA . . . CHECK *THIS* PLACE OUT.
THESE THINGS ARE GOING TO COME ALIVE AND ATTACK US, AREN'T THEY?
NOT A CHANCE. THEY AREN'T COMPLETE.
THE WIRING ISN'T CONNECTED, AND THE PULLEY SYSTEMS FOR THE JOINTS ARE OUT OF ALIGNMENT.
MY GUESS IS THE ROMANS WERE TRYING TO DUPLICATE A *GREEK* DESIGN, BUT THEY DIDN'T HAVE THE SKILL.
HERE WE GO AGAIN. GREEKS ARE *SO* MUCH SMARTER.
HEY, I CALL IT LIKE I SEE IT.
I'VE HEARD LEGENDS THAT THE ROMANS CONFISCATED THE WORK OF *ARCHIMEDES*.
HE WAS AN ANCIENT MATHMETICIAN AND INVENTOR AND THE MOST FAMOUS SON OF HEPHAESTUS WHO EVER LIVED.

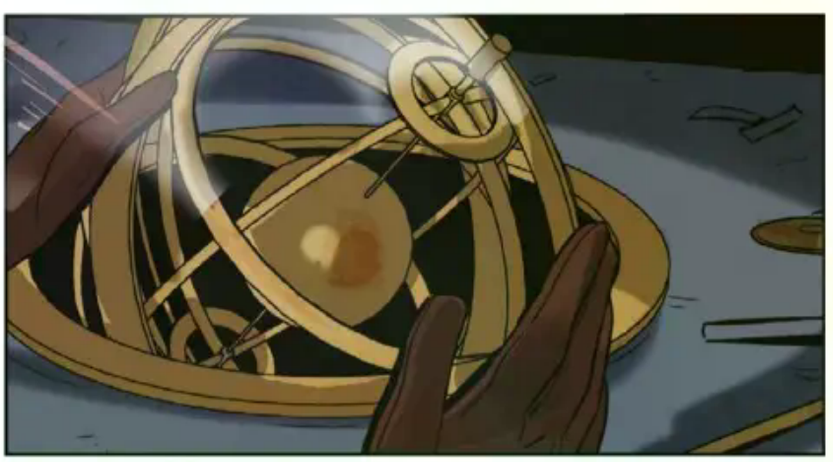
EVREKA!
SORT OF LIKE THE EINSTEIN OF THE ANCIENT WORLD. BUT SOME STUPID ROMAN SOLDIER KILLED HIM.
ARCHIMEDES WAS SERIOUSLY ELITE. HE CALCULATED THE VALUE OF PI. HE ALSO INVENTED A GIANT CRANE THAT COULD PICK ENEMY SHIPS OUT OF THE WATER.
ACCORDING TO LEGENDS, THE ROMAN GENERAL WAS SUCH A BIG FAN, HE RAIDED ARCHIMEDES'S WORKSHOP AND TOOK A BUNCH OF PROJECTS BACK TO ROME.
π = 3.1415926535
THEY DISAPPEARED FROM HISTORY . . . AND I THINK WE JUST FOUND THEM. I WONDER IF . . .
NO WAY! THIS IS IT!
THE ARCHIMEDES SPHERE!
THIS IS BIGGER THAN DAEDALUS'S LAPTOP.
IF I CAN GET THIS WORKING, ITS SECRETS COULD SAVE CAMP HALF-BLOOD! THEY COULD GIVE US AN EDGE AGAINST GAEA AND THE GIANTS!
GUYS? DID YOU HEAR ME?
THIS IS HUGE.
WHAT THE-?!


YOU CANNOT ESCAPE US, LEO VALDEZ.
YOU *WILL NOT* LEAVE HERE ALIVE.
THE MALE AND FEMALE DEMIGOD WILL DO WELL IF THE OTHERS DIE.
WE DO NOT NEED *YOU*, LEO VALDEZ.

I HAVE BEEN IN YOUR *MIND*, LEO. I HELPED YOU START THE WAR.
I KNOW HOW YOU THINK. I KNOW YOUR *LIMITS*. YOU ARE SMALL AND ALONE.

OPEN THIS GATE OR I WILL KILL YOU!
YOU ALREADY SAID YOU WERE GOING TO KILL ME ANYWAY!
POUND
POUND

C'MON, LEO. *THINK.*



THIS IS FOOLISH. YOU ONLY DELAY YOUR OWN DEATH!
DELAYING DEATH IS ONE OF MY FAVORITE HOBBIES!
RECONNECT THE WIRES . . .
CALIBRATE THE TENSION ADJUSTER . . .
VALDEZ! IF YOU DON'T LET US KILL YOU, WE'LL KILL YOUR FRIENDS!
VALDEZ ISN'T HOME! LEAVE A MESSAGE!
GOT IT!
NOW, WHAT'S THE CODE TO TURN IT ON?
VALDEZ!
"SOON YOU WILL FACE A PROBLEM YOU CANNOT SOLVE, AND I WILL HELP YOU.
"FOR A PRICE."
I NEED THE ACTIVATION CODE FOR THIS SPHERE.
That's your request? Seriously?

WHRRR KLIK KLAKT
That's your request? Seriously?
γ, α, δ, α, ε . . .
THE FIRST FIVE DIGITS OF PI!
4 2 5 2 6
3 1 4 1 5
2 9 3 9 4
KZZN
POPP
ZKNN
. . . WHAT IS HAPPENING?

WELCOME TO LEO WORLD.
. . . WHAT IS HAPPENING?
RRAAGH!
SMASH
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
STOP!
I CANNOT!

YOU WILL DIE FOR THIS, VALDEZ!
BLONG
WHO'S POSSESSING WHO NOW?
FRANK! HAZEL! IF YOU'RE ALIVE–
–TAKE COVER!

NOOOOOOO!
YOU'RE ALIVE?
I MEAN, I KNEW IT!
YEAH, RIGHT. EVERYTHING WENT JUST THE WAY YOU PLANNED.

WHAT HAPPENED?
ARCHIMEDES CAME THROUGH! JUST ENOUGH *POWER* IN HIS OLD MACHINES FOR ONE FINAL SHOW.
BEFORE EVERYTHING EXPLODED, I OVERLOADED THE CIRCUITS AND *TRAPPED* THE EIDOLONS INSIDE THE WIRING. THEY WON'T BE BOTHERING US AGAIN.
TOO BAD ALL THIS STUFF GOT WRECKED, BUT AT LEAST I SAVED THE ARCHIMEDES SPHERE.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND . . . WHERE'S NICO? THE TRAIL LED ME *HERE*.
LOOK. *STYGIAN IRON.*
THE GIANTS MOVED NICO'S SWORD HERE AS A DECOY.
THIS WAS ALL A *TRAP*.
OH. OH, NO.
WHERE'S MY BROTHER?!
AH, MY POOR *DEMIGODS*.
YOU HAD YOUR CHOICE.
I OFFERED SALVATION TO ALL OF YOU. YOU COULD HAVE TURNED BACK. NOW IT IS TOO LATE. YOU'VE COME TO THE *ANCIENT LANDS* WHERE I AM STRONGEST–WHERE I WILL *WAKE*.

IN CASE YOU HAVEN'T NOTICED, DIRT FACE, YOUR LITTLE AMBUSH FAILED. YOUR THREE EIDOLONS GOT MELTED IN BRONZE, AND WE'RE FINE.
OH, MY SWEET LEO. YOU THREE HAVE BEEN SEPARATED FROM YOUR FRIENDS. THAT WAS THE WHOLE POINT.
ANNABETH CHASE FACES HER DEATH ALONE, TERRIFIED AND CRIPPLED, AT THE HANDS OF HER MOTHER'S GREATEST ENEMY.
JASON GRACE, PIPER MCLEAN, AND MY DEAR FRIEND PERCY JACKSON—THEY WILL PERISH WITHIN MINUTES.
MY MINIONS WILL BE ALONG TO COLLECT YOU IN MOMENTS. I'LL SEE YOU AT THE ANCIENT STONES, LITTLE HEROES.
WHAT DO WE DO? WE HAVE TO HELP THE OTHERS.
AND NICO.
WE WILL. WE'LL HELP THEM ALL.
I'VE GOT AN IDEA.

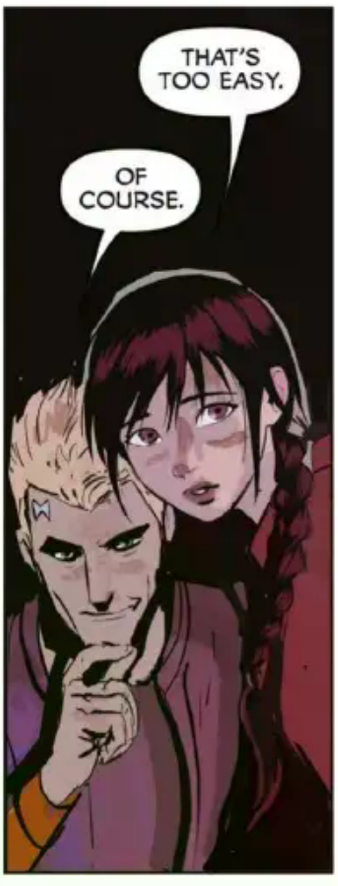
16
THAT CORNUCOPIA SURE IS HANDY.
I STILL FEEL BAD ABOUT TAKING IT FROM ACHELOUS. HERCULES WAS WRONG TO PUT US IN THE MIDDLE OF HIS FEUD.
NICE TO HAVE A PICNIC WITH YOU, THOUGH.
I'VE BEEN THINKING.
THINKING? ABOUT WHAT?
ALL MY YEARS TRAINING AT CAMP JUPITER, THEY WERE ALWAYS PUSHING TEAMWORK. BUT HONESTLY? I WAS ALWAYS THE LEADER.
BEING IN THIS CREW OF SEVEN . . . I'M NOT SURE WHAT TO DO. I'M NOT USED TO BEING ONE OF SO MANY, WELL, EQUALS. I FEEL LIKE I'M FAILING.
BEING A HERO DOESN'T MEAN YOU'RE INVINCIBLE. IT JUST MEANS YOU'RE BRAVE ENOUGH TO STAND UP AND DO WHAT'S NEEDED.
WHAT IF I DON'T KNOW WHAT'S NEEDED?
THAT'S WHAT YOUR FRIENDS ARE FOR. WE'VE ALL GOT DIFFERENT STRENGTHS. TOGETHER, WE'LL FIGURE IT OUT.
16
I DON'T DESERVE YOU.
PERCY?
PERCY?!

YOU CALL THAT *RUNNING*, JACKSON?
ANNABETH IS FOLLOWING THE MARK. MAYBE I SHOULDN'T HAVE LEFT HER, BUT SHE DIDN'T GIVE ME A CHOICE.
I WON'T SIT AROUND AND DO NOTHING.
PIPER, USE YOUR *DAGGER*. SEE IF YOU CAN FIND NICO.
IT DOESN'T ALWAYS WORK THAT WAY–
TRY. PLEASE.
OKAY. I'LL TRY.
THAT'S THEM. THE TWINS.
AND THERE'S *NICO'S JAR*.
HAZEL, FRANK, AND LEO SHOULD BE BACK SOON, BUT NICO IS RUNNING OUT OF TIME.
I'M SEEING . . . AN OLD BUILDING. WHERE IS THAT?
IT'S THE *FORUM*. WE HAVE A REPLICA OF IT AT CAMP JUPITER.

COACH, YOU STAY HERE.
SIT ON THE SIDELINE AND LET YOU THREE HAVE ALL THE FUN?
HAZEL AND THE OTHERS NEED YOU HERE.
KEEP AN EYE ON US WITH THIS.
AND, YOU KNOW, YOU CAN CHECK BASEBALL SCORES OR WHATEVER.
MAYBE THIS ISN'T SUCH A BAD PLAN . . .
TAKE TOO LONG, AND I'M COMING AFTER YOU WITH BALLISTAE BLAZING!
LATER . . .
THIS IS IT. I SAW THIS GATE IN THE DAGGER.
GOING DOWN.
SHINK

Hypogeum →

LOOK.


THAT'S TOO EASY.
OF COURSE.

BUT WE HAVE NO CHOICE.

AT LAST!
YOU'RE JUST IN TIME FOR THE MAIN EVENT!
EPHIALTES AND OTIS. WE'RE HERE. LET OUR FRIEND GO.

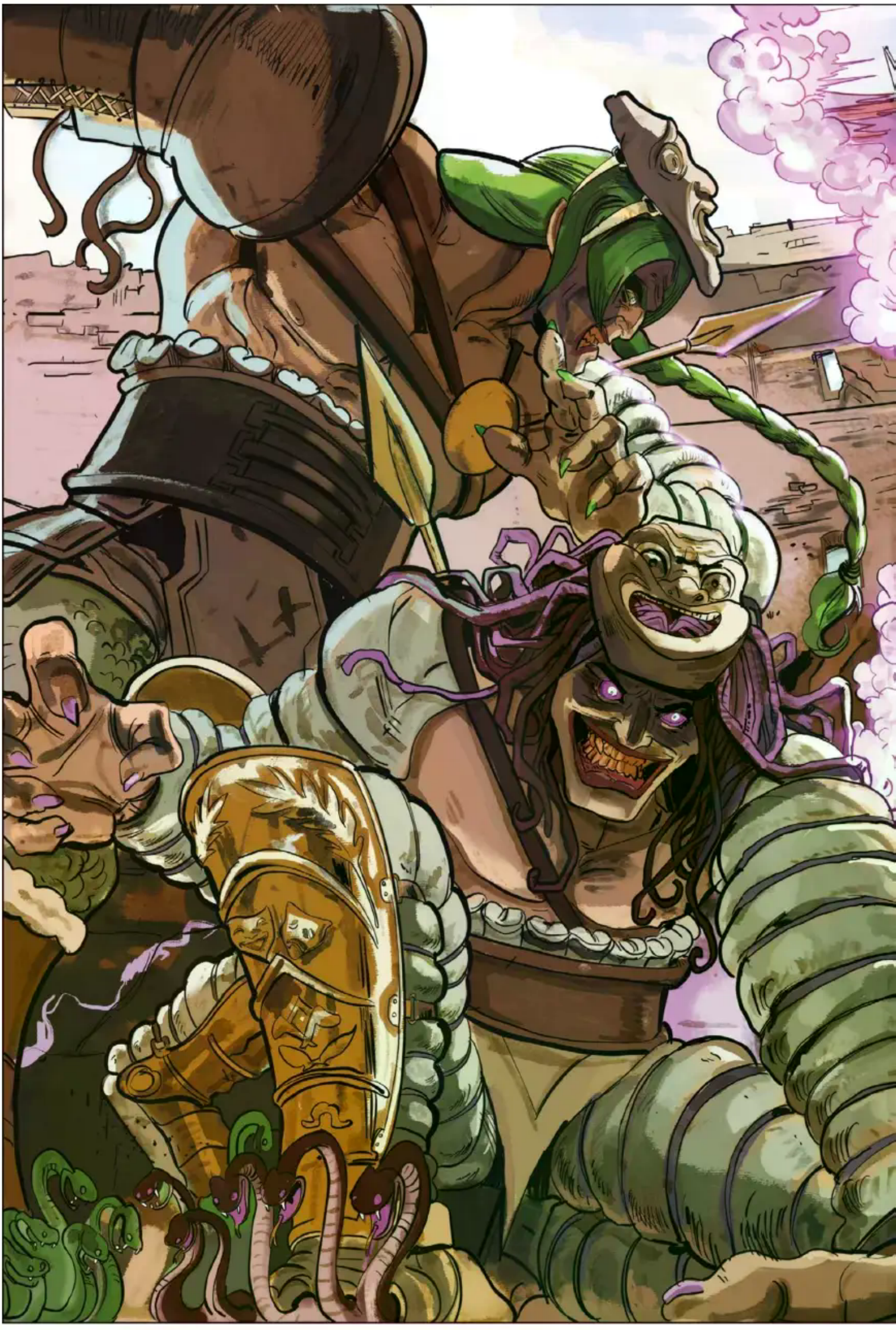
HMMM. NO.
WE HAVE SOMETHING MUCH MORE ENTERTAINING IN STORE. YOUR FRIENDS LEO, HAZEL, AND FRANK ARE ALREADY LOCKED UP, SO WE CAN USE THEM FOR THE SACRIFICE.
WE CAN LET THE ATHENA GIRL DIE, WHICH WILL PLEASE ARACHNE. THAT LEAVES YOU THREE FOR THE SHOW. GAEA WILL BE A BIT DISAPPOINTED, BUT REALLY, EVERYONE WINS.
YOU WILL DIE IN AGONY, UP ABOVE, WHERE ALL THE GODS AND MORTALS CAN WATCH. BUT THE REAL SPECTACLE—THE DESTRUCTION OF ROME—WILL GO ON FOR A FULL MONTH.
THE EARTH MOTHER SAYS SHE WILL AWAKEN ON AUGUST FIRST. SOMETHING ABOUT THAT BEING THE BEST DATE TO DESTROY ALL HUMANKIND.
WE WON'T GIVE UP! WE'LL CUT YOU INTO PIECES LIKE JUPITER DID TO SATURN.
THAT'S RIGHT. YOU'RE BOTH DEAD. I DON'T CARE IF WE HAVE A GOD ON OUR SIDE OR NOT.
WELL, THAT'S A SHAME—
I'D HATE TO THINK I MADE THE TRIP HERE FOR NOTHING.

D-D-DION–
THIS–THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE!
IT'S BACCHUS, ACTUALLY, MY OLD FRIEND. AND OF COURSE IT'S POSSIBLE. YOU SAID YOU THROW A BETTER PARTY THAN I DO.
I HAD TO SEE THAT FOR MYSELF. SO FAR, ALL I SEE IS TACKY, CHEAP, AND BORING. NO SENSE OF STYLE.
WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER IMPRESSIVE?
AH, A GOOD QUESTION . . . PERHAPS YOU NEED INSPIRATION.

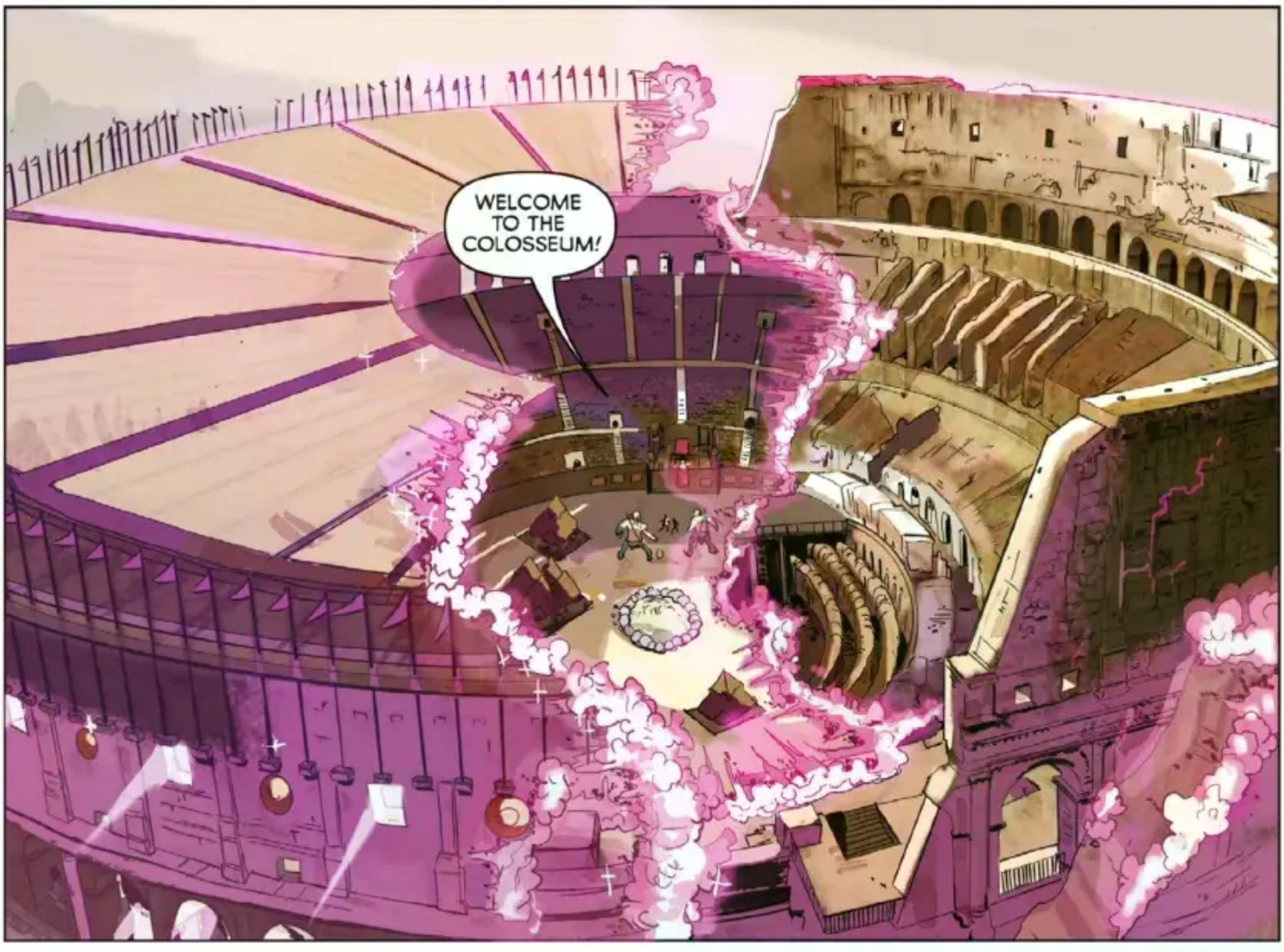
LET ME SHOW YOU HOW IT'S DONE.
POOM!
PIPES!
BACCHUS, WHERE DID YOU-?
POOM!
POOM!

RRRMMMM

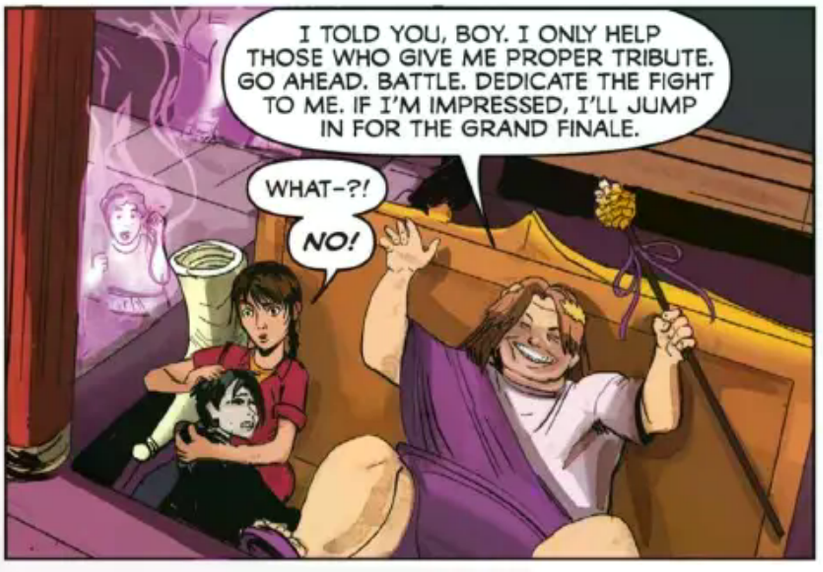
SHOWTIME!



THIS IS A PROPER SHOW!


WELCOME TO THE COLOSSEUM!

LORD BACCHUS, ARE WE GOING TO KILL THESE GIANTS OR WHAT?
WELL, I CERTAINLY HOPE SO. PLEASE, CARRY ON.
DIDN'T YOU COME HERE TO *HELP*?


I TOLD YOU, BOY. I ONLY HELP THOSE WHO GIVE ME PROPER TRIBUTE. GO AHEAD. BATTLE. DEDICATE THE FIGHT TO ME. IF I'M IMPRESSED, I'LL JUMP IN FOR THE GRAND FINALE.
WHAT-?!
NO!

YOUR FATHER IS A *FAMOUS ACTOR*, PIPER MCLEAN. YOU KNOW ENTERTAINMENT. WE'LL TAKE IN THIS PERFORMANCE TOGETHER.
BESIDES, YOUR FRIEND'S BROTHER NEEDS SEEING TO. SURELY YOU DON'T THINK I AM GOING TO PLAY THE ROLE OF CAREGIVER.

JUNO SAYS SHE'S ASSEMBLED A FORMIDABLE CREW OF HEROES.
YOU'RE JUST GOING TO *SIT* THERE?
THE DEMIGOD IS RIGHT! FIGHT US YOURSELF, COWARD!
SHOW ME. *ENTERTAIN ME,* HEROES OF OLYMPUS. GIVE ME A REASON TO DO MORE.
MAKE THIS A PROPER SHOW!

KDOOOM

WHICH ONE DO YOU WANT? I'LL GIVE YOU FIRST PICK.
NO. WE ATTACK *TOGETHER*. HERA MADE US A TEAM FOR A REASON. WE WORK AS ONE.
OTIS FIRST. HE SEEMS WEAKER. TAKE HIM OUT QUICKLY AND MOVE TO EPHIALTES.

COULD A WEAKER GIANT HOLD THIS?
OKAY, THEN. IDEAS?
FEELS LIKE A GOOD WIND TODAY. AND THERE'S SOME WATER PIPES RUNNING UNDER THE ARENA.
WHOOOSH
FSSSS
YOU'RE RUINING THE SHOW!

WHOOSH
FOR OLYMPUS!
SPLOOSH
SPLOOSH
I'LL KEEP THE WATER SWIRLING. TRY TO STOP HIM FROM RE-FORMING.
ONE TWIN DOWN, ONE TO GO–

I'LL HANDLE THIS.
KBBOOM
ZZZAT
NICE TRY, JUPITER SPAWN.
YOU MAY HAVE RUINED MY SPECTACLE, BUT GAEA WILL BURN YOUR WORLD.

SLICE!
NO!
tractos
WHACK
I LOVE A DRAMA WITH A HAPPY ENDING.

UH-UMH-
MOOOO!
?
FOOSH!

BRAVO! BRAVO!
ACTION! SUSPENSE! EVEN A TWIST ENDING!
tractos
THIS ISN'T OVER.
WE CAN'T KILL THEM OURSELVES. IT HAS TO BE A HERO AND A GOD BOTH DOING THEIR PART.

I WOULD HAVE PROLONGED THE ENTERTAINMENT, BUT I SUPPOSE IT'S GOOD TO LEAVE THE AUDIENCE WANTING MORE. I DEEM YOUR TRIBUTE PASSABLE.
YOU ARE WORTHY PARTNERS FOR THIS COMBAT.
POP!
POP!
POP!
PARTNERS?!
DON'T DO IT-!
ONE FOR YOU.
POOMF
AND ONE FOR YOU.
POOMF
I JUST KILLED TWO GIANTS. A FULL DAY.
THAT WAS FUN. YOU HAVE MY PERMISSION TO CONTINUE YOUR VOYAGE.

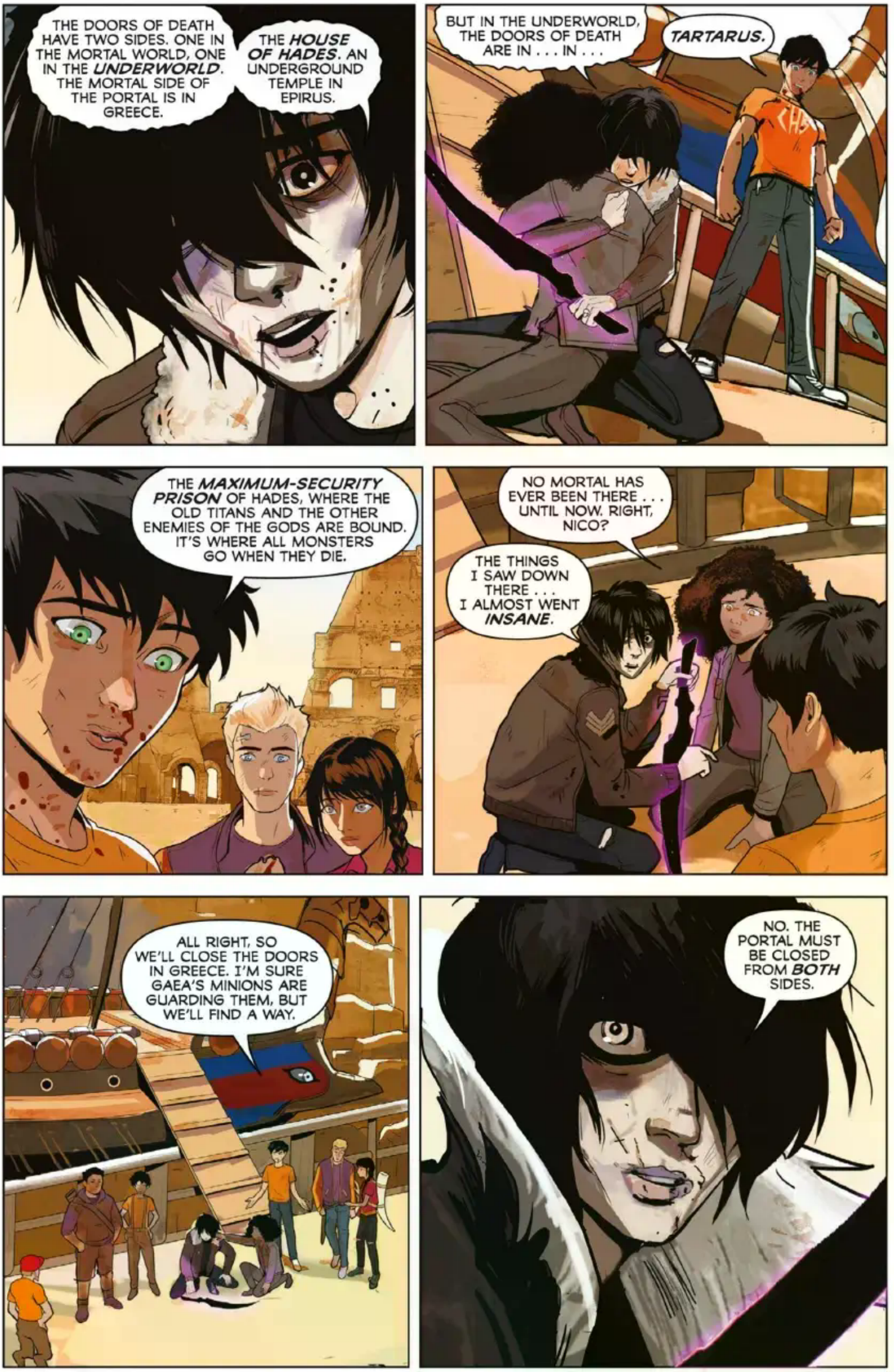
YOU MIGHT TRY THE PARKING LOT BEHIND THE EMMANUEL BUILDING. BEST PLACE TO BREAK THROUGH. GOOD-BYE, AND GOOD LUCK WITH THAT OTHER LITTLE MATTER.

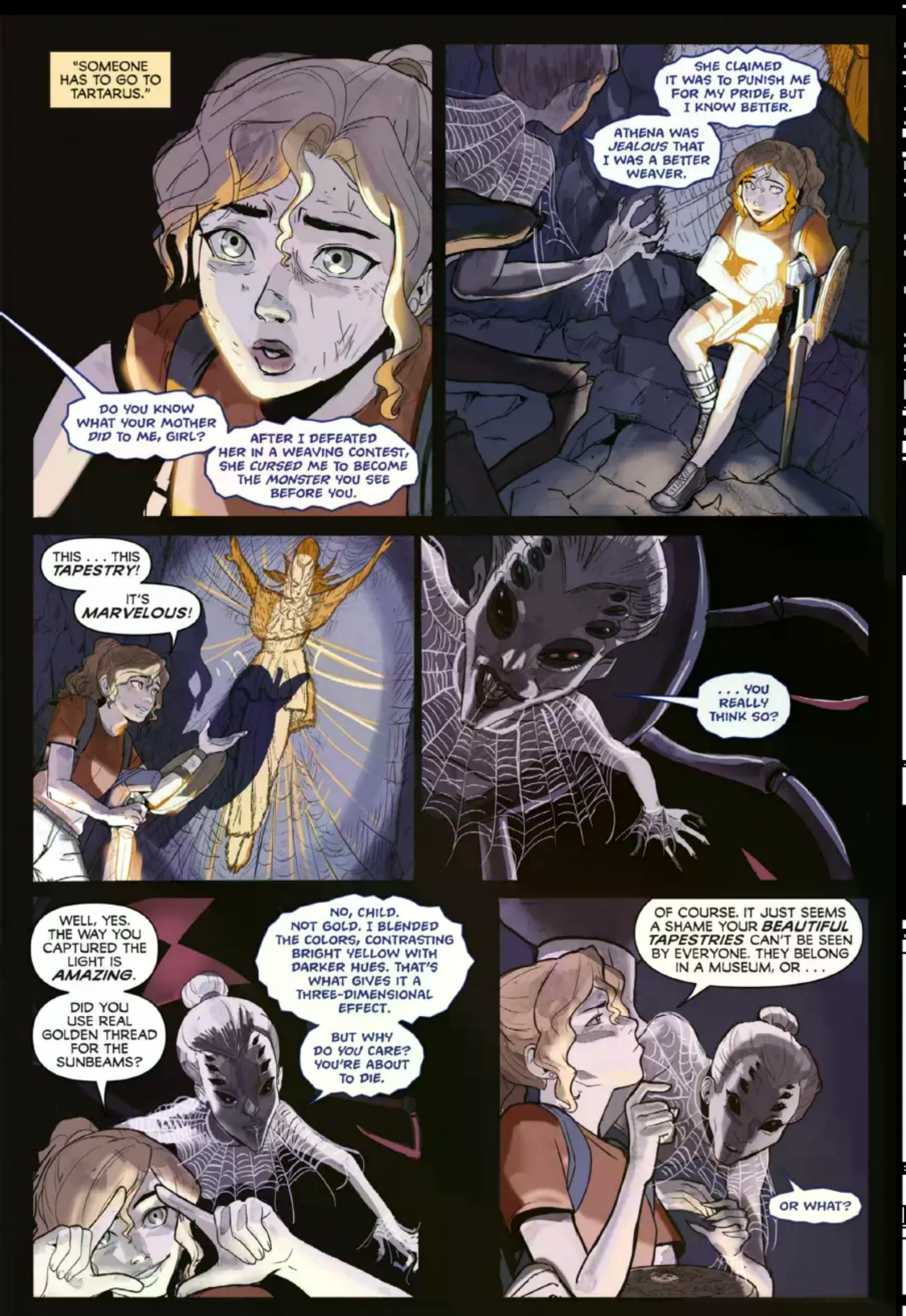
YOU'RE ALIVE!
THE GIANTS SAID YOU WERE CAPTURED. HOW'D YOU GET AWAY?

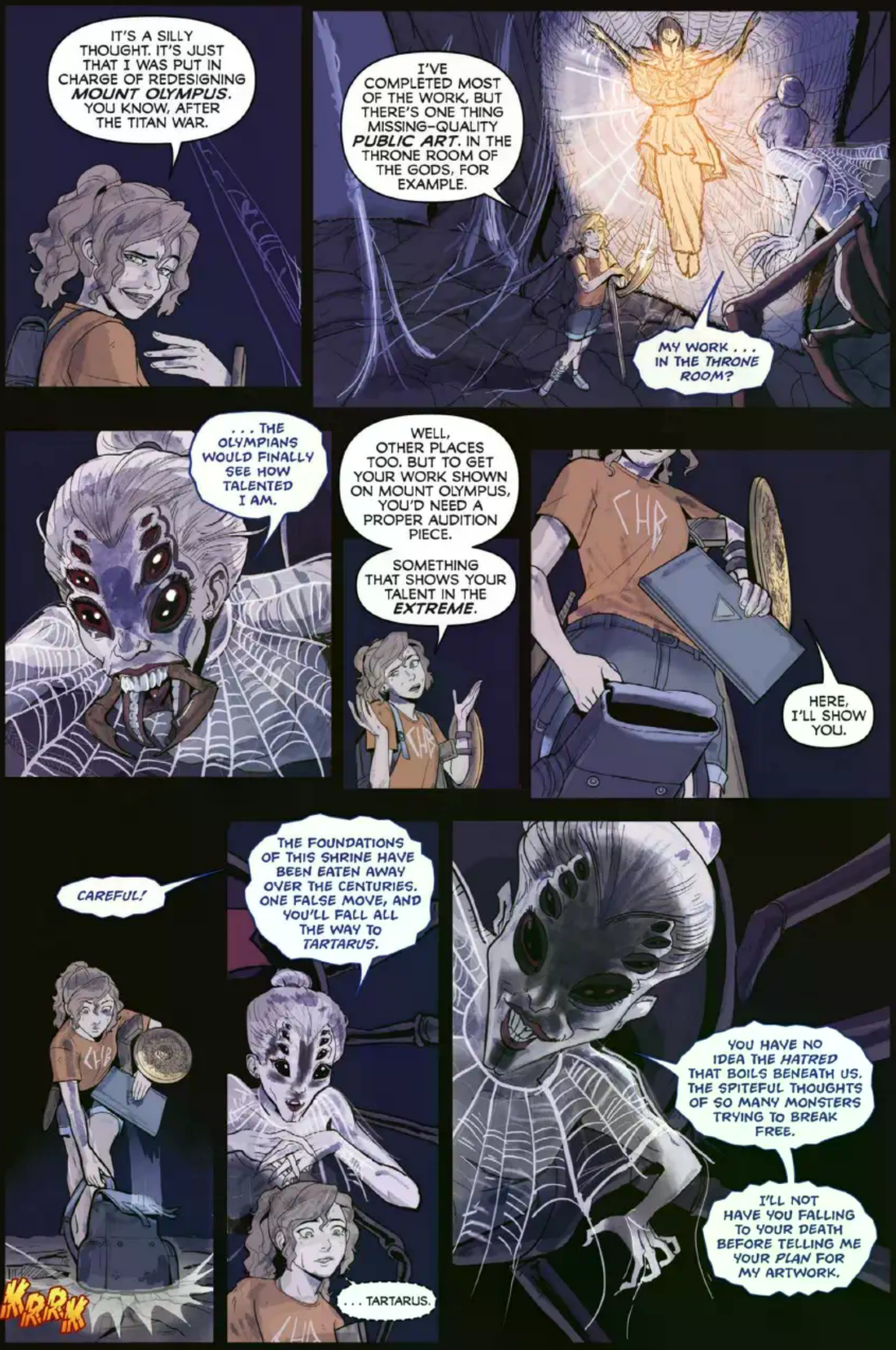
JUST ANOTHER BRILLIANT PLAN BY LEO VALDEZ.
I MADE A HYDRAULIC SCREW TO DIG A TUNNEL, HAZEL SENSED THE EASIEST PATH . . .

. . . AND FRANK TURNED INTO A WEASEL AND CRAWLED THROUGH TO CALL COACH HEDGE.

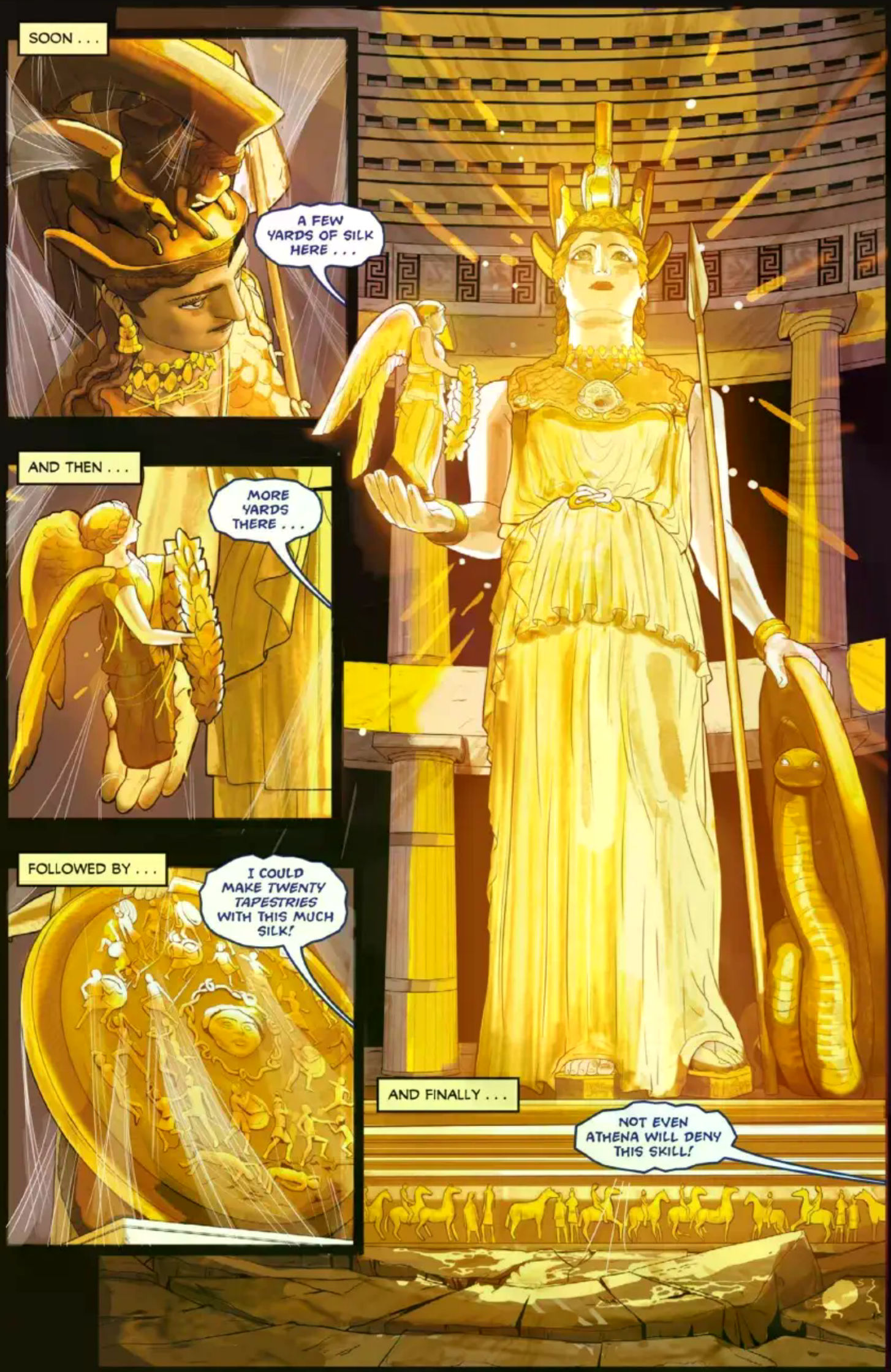
NOW WE HAVE TO FIND ANNABETH.
GUYS. NICO . . .
I WAS A FOOL. I THOUGHT I COULD GO ANYWHERE IN THE UNDERWORLD, BUT I WALKED RIGHT INTO GAEA'S TRAP.


THE DOORS OF DEATH HAVE TWO SIDES. ONE IN THE MORTAL WORLD, ONE IN THE UNDERWORLD. THE MORTAL SIDE OF THE PORTAL IS IN GREECE.
THE HOUSE OF HADES. AN UNDERGROUND TEMPLE IN EPIRUS.
BUT IN THE UNDERWORLD, THE DOORS OF DEATH ARE IN . . . IN . . .
TARTARUS.
THE MAXIMUM-SECURITY PRISON OF HADES, WHERE THE OLD TITANS AND THE OTHER ENEMIES OF THE GODS ARE BOUND. IT'S WHERE ALL MONSTERS GO WHEN THEY DIE.
NO MORTAL HAS EVER BEEN THERE . . . UNTIL NOW. RIGHT, NICO?
THE THINGS I SAW DOWN THERE . . . I ALMOST WENT INSANE.
ALL RIGHT, SO WE'LL CLOSE THE DOORS IN GREECE. I'M SURE GAEA'S MINIONS ARE GUARDING THEM, BUT WE'LL FIND A WAY.
NO. THE PORTAL MUST BE CLOSED FROM BOTH SIDES.


"SOMEONE HAS TO GO TO TARTARUS."
DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOUR MOTHER DID TO ME, GIRL?
AFTER I DEFEATED HER IN A WEAVING CONTEST, SHE CURSED ME TO BECOME THE MONSTER YOU SEE BEFORE YOU.
SHE CLAIMED IT WAS TO PUNISH ME FOR MY PRIDE, BUT I KNOW BETTER.
ATHENA WAS JEALOUS THAT I WAS A BETTER WEAVER.
THIS . . . THIS TAPESTRY!
IT'S MARVELOUS!
. . . YOU REALLY THINK SO?
WELL, YES. THE WAY YOU CAPTURED THE LIGHT IS AMAZING.
DID YOU USE REAL GOLDEN THREAD FOR THE SUNBEAMS?
NO, CHILD. NOT GOLD. I BLENDED THE COLORS, CONTRASTING BRIGHT YELLOW WITH DARKER HUES. THAT'S WHAT GIVES IT A THREE-DIMENSIONAL EFFECT.
BUT WHY DO YOU CARE? YOU'RE ABOUT TO DIE.
OF COURSE. IT JUST SEEMS A SHAME YOUR BEAUTIFUL TAPESTRIES CAN'T BE SEEN BY EVERYONE. THEY BELONG IN A MUSEUM, OR . . .
OR WHAT?


IT'S A SILLY THOUGHT. IT'S JUST THAT I WAS PUT IN CHARGE OF REDESIGNING *MOUNT OLYMPUS*. YOU KNOW, AFTER THE TITAN WAR.
I'VE COMPLETED MOST OF THE WORK, BUT THERE'S ONE THING MISSING—QUALITY *PUBLIC ART*. IN THE THRONE ROOM OF THE GODS, FOR EXAMPLE.
MY WORK . . . IN THE THRONE ROOM?
. . . THE OLYMPIANS WOULD FINALLY SEE HOW TALENTED I AM.
WELL, OTHER PLACES TOO. BUT TO GET YOUR WORK SHOWN ON MOUNT OLYMPUS, YOU'D NEED A PROPER AUDITION PIECE.
SOMETHING THAT SHOWS YOUR TALENT IN THE *EXTREME*.
HERE, I'LL SHOW YOU.
CAREFUL!
THE FOUNDATIONS OF THIS SHRINE HAVE BEEN EATEN AWAY OVER THE CENTURIES. ONE FALSE MOVE, AND YOU'LL FALL ALL THE WAY TO *TARTARUS*.
KRRK
. . . TARTARUS.
YOU HAVE NO IDEA THE *HATRED* THAT BOILS BENEATH US. THE SPITEFUL THOUGHTS OF SO MANY MONSTERS TRYING TO BREAK FREE.
I'LL NOT HAVE YOU FALLING TO YOUR DEATH BEFORE TELLING ME YOUR *PLAN* FOR MY ARTWORK.

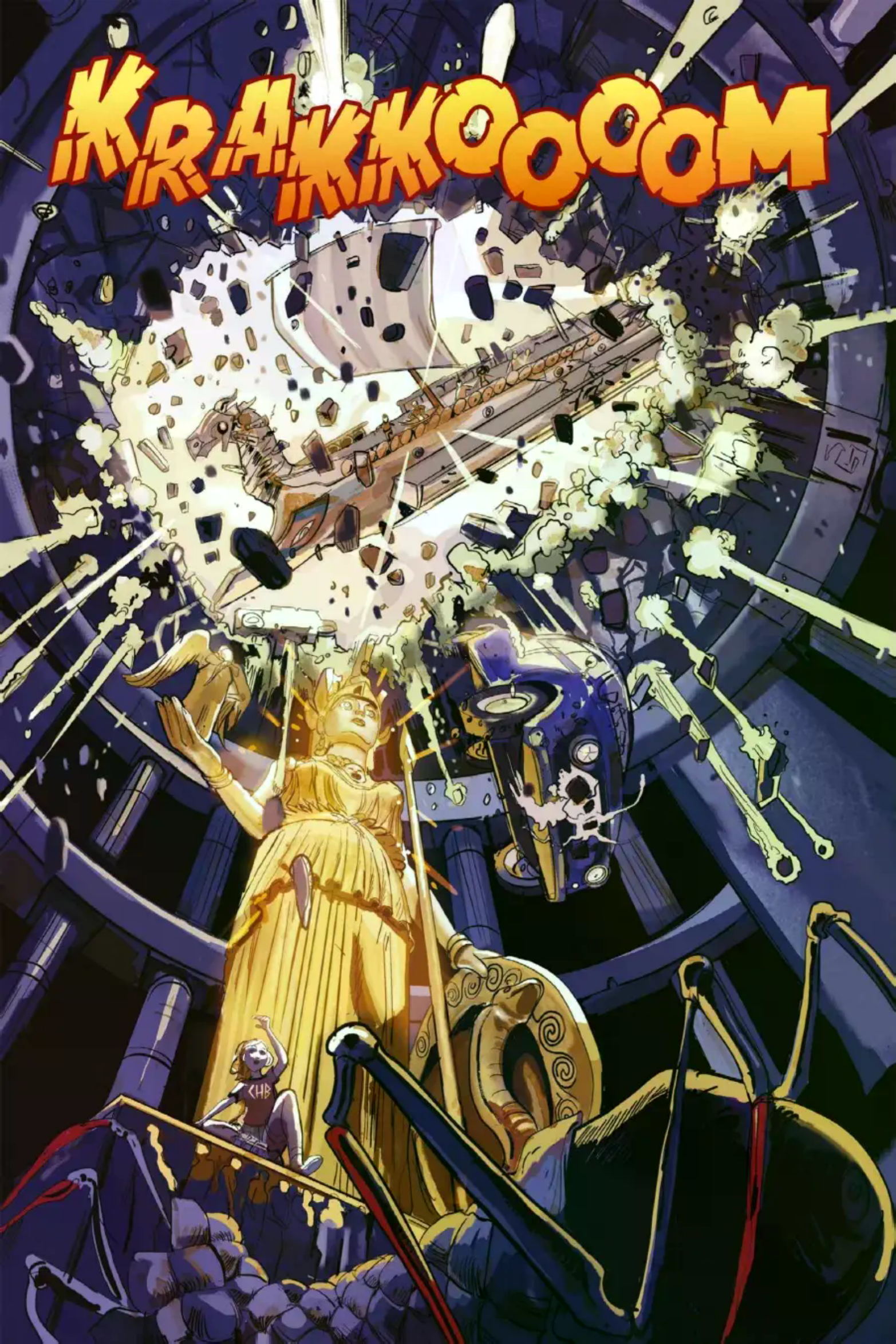
RIGHT, THE PLAN. UM . . . AS I SAID, I'D LOVE TO HANG YOUR TAPESTRIES ALL OVER OLYMPUS, BUT YOU MUST PROVE YOUR SKILL IN A WAY THAT NOT EVEN ATHENA CAN DENY.
SOMETHING LIKE THIS.
YOU WANT ME TO MAKE THAT? BUT THIS IS NOTHING. SO SMALL AND SIMPLE!
THE ACTUAL SIZE WOULD BE MUCH BIGGER. LARGE ENOUGH TO IMPRESS THE GODS.
YOUR SPIDER SILK WOULD BE THE PERFECT MATERIAL–SOFT AND FLEXIBLE, YET HARD AS STEEL.
SOMETHING THAT LARGE WOULD TAKE A GREAT DEAL OF WEB. MORE THAN I COULD MAKE IN A YEAR.
YOU'RE RIGHT. IT'S TOO HARD FOR YOU. ATHENA SAID IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE.
IT'D BE EASIER TO JUST KILL ME NOW.
RIDICULOUS! I CAN WEAVE IT!
BUT WHERE TO GET THE THREAD . . .
YOU COULD UNRAVEL THE ATHENA PARTHENOS. REUSE THE SILK.
THAT MIGHT BE ENOUGH.
YES, YES. IT WOULD BE ENOUGH.
I'LL WAIT RIGHT HERE AS YOUR HOSTAGE. ONCE THE SCULPTURE IS COMPLETE, YOU'LL AGREE THAT IT'S THE MOST AMAZING PIECE YOU'VE EVER DONE.
IF NOT, I WILL GLADLY DIE.
YES!
ONE LAST CHALLENGE TO DEFEAT ATHENA ONCE AND FOR ALL!


SOON . . .
A FEW YARDS OF SILK HERE . . .
AND THEN . . .
MORE YARDS THERE . . .
FOLLOWED BY . . .
I COULD MAKE TWENTY TAPESTRIES WITH THIS MUCH SILK!
AND FINALLY . . .
NOT EVEN ATHENA WILL DENY THIS SKILL!

DONE! NOW, MY REWARD!
PROVE TO ME YOU CAN DELIVER ON YOUR PROMISE!
THIS IS VERY NICE WORK. VERY NICE INDEED.
THE WEAVING IS SO INTRICATE. EVERY THREAD PERFECTLY WOVEN–
OH. UH-OH.
THERE'S A FLAW.
IMPOSSIBLE! I FOLLOWED THE DIAGRAM TO THE LAST DETAIL!
CRAWL IN AND SEE FOR YOURSELF. IT'S RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE.
A FLAW IN THE WEAVING.

I DO NOT MAKE MISTAKES.
I'M SURE YOU CAN FIX IT. BUT I DON'T WANT TO SHOW THE GODS ANYTHING BUT YOUR BEST WORK.
IF YOU FIX IT, THEN WE'LL SHOW IT TO THE OLYMPIANS. YOU'LL BE THE MOST FAMOUS ARTIST OF ALL TIME. THEY'LL PROBABLY FIRE THE NINE MUSES AND HIRE YOU TO OVERSEE THE ARTS.
THE GODDESS ARACHNE.
YES! YES! I WILL FIX THIS FLAW!
WHERE IS IT?
RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE. GO AHEAD. IT MIGHT BE A BIT SNUG FOR YOU.
I SEE NO FLAW!
WHAT—?
I AM STUCK!
I FORGOT TO MENTION. THIS PIECE OF ART IS CALLED A FINGER TRAP. OR IN YOUR CASE, A SPIDER TRAP.
THE ARTWORK THAT I'LL DISPLAY MOST PROMINENTLY ON MOUNT OLYMPUS? IT WON'T BE YOURS. IT'LL BE THE ATHENA PARTHENOS.
THANKS FOR UNWRAPPING IT FOR ME.
AND I HAVE A FRIEND TO THANK FOR REMINDING ME THAT SIMPLE ANSWERS ARE SOMETIMES THE BEST.

NO! TREACHERY!
KRKK
THE FLOOR . . .
STOP THRASHING! YOU'LL BRING DOWN THE WHOLE CAVERN AND KILL US BOTH!
KRAKRAKK
BETTER THAN SEEING A CHILD OF ATHENA WIN!
KRAKK
KRAKRAKK
PERCY, I'M SORRY.


KRAKKOOOOM

LEO VALDEZ, MECHANICAL GENIUS, TO THE RESCUE.
KRAK

ANNABETH!
SAVE THE ATHENA PARTHENOS!
IT'S OKAY. WE'RE TOGETHER.
I THINK I BROKE MY ANKLE.
"THE GIANTS' BANE STANDS GOLD AND PALE. WON WITH PAIN FROM A WOVEN JAIL."
YOU DID IT, ANNABETH. GENERATIONS OF ATHENA KIDS TRIED AND FAILED, BUT YOU DID IT.
LET'S GET OUT OF HERE BEFORE–
SHWIP
AAAIGH!
ANNABETH!

NO ESCAPE.
I GO TO TARTARUS—
—AND YOU WILL COME TOO.
PERCY . . .
. . . LET ME GO. YOU CAN'T PULL ME UP.
NEVER.

THE CAVERN IS COLLAPSING! LOWER THE SHIP!
THERE'S NO TIME!
THE OTHER SIDE, NICO! WE'LL SEE YOU THERE. UNDERSTAND?
BUT-
LEAD THEM THERE!
PROMISE ME!
I . . .
I WILL . . .

WE'RE STAYING TOGETHER.
YOU'RE NOT GETTING AWAY FROM ME.
NEVER AGAIN.
AS LONG AS WE'RE TOGETHER.

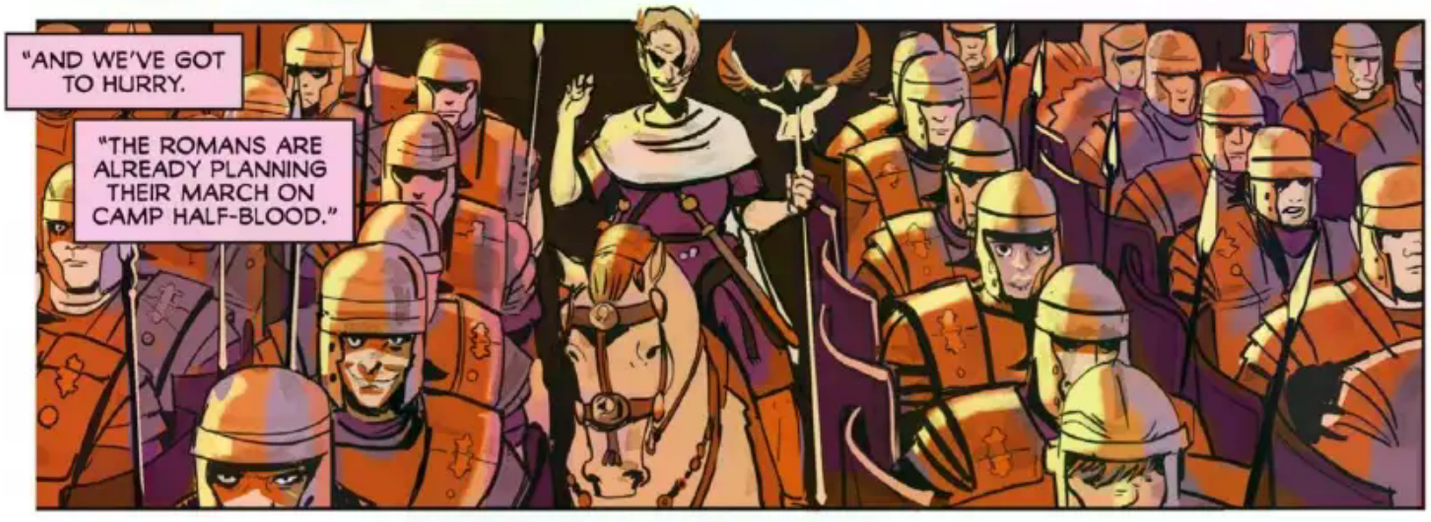
THEY'RE NOT DEAD.
IF THEY WERE, I'D FEEL IT.

THIS IS GAEA'S FAULT. SHE DID THIS.
IT ISN'T OVER. PERCY IS PLANNING TO MEET US AT THE DOORS OF DEATH.

"HE AND ANNABETH WILL FIND A WAY TO SURVIVE TARTARUS AND GET THERE."

I DON'T KNOW HOW, BUT THEY WILL. AND WE'LL BE WAITING FOR THEM.
WE'VE GOT NO CHOICE.

"BUT GAEA WILL THROW EVERYTHING SHE'S GOT AT US TO KEEP US FROM REACHING THE MORTAL SIDE OF THE DOORS.
"WE HAVE TO SEAL THEM.


"AND WE'VE GOT TO HURRY.
"THE ROMANS ARE ALREADY PLANNING THEIR MARCH ON CAMP HALF-BLOOD."

WE'VE GOT ONE MONTH AT BEST.
THEN WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR?
FESTUS, RAISE THE SAILS.

WE'VE GOT SOME FRIENDS TO SAVE.

TO BE CONTINUED IN
THE ADAPTATION OF
THE HOUSE OF HADES!